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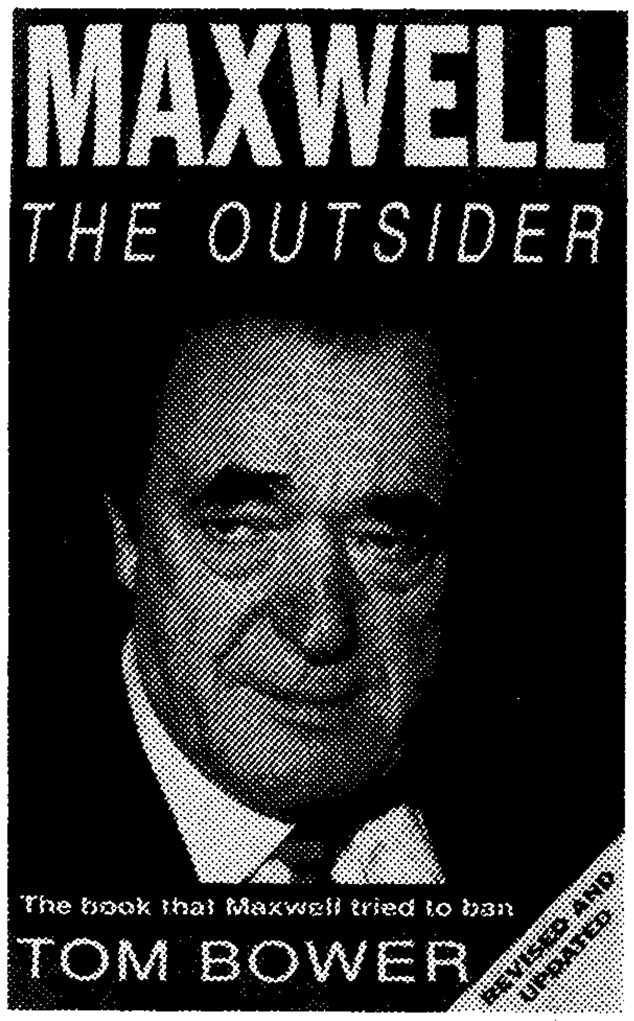

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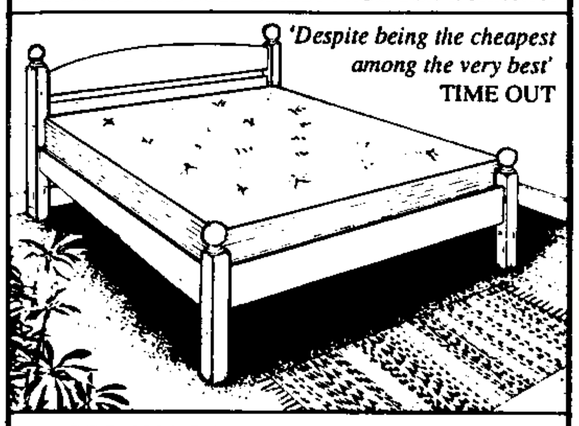

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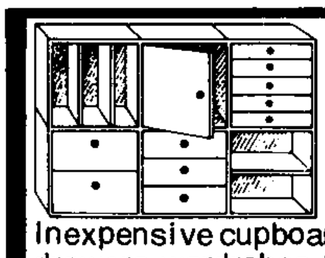

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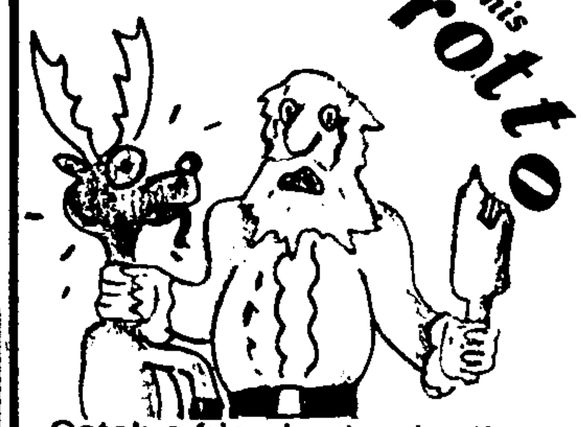

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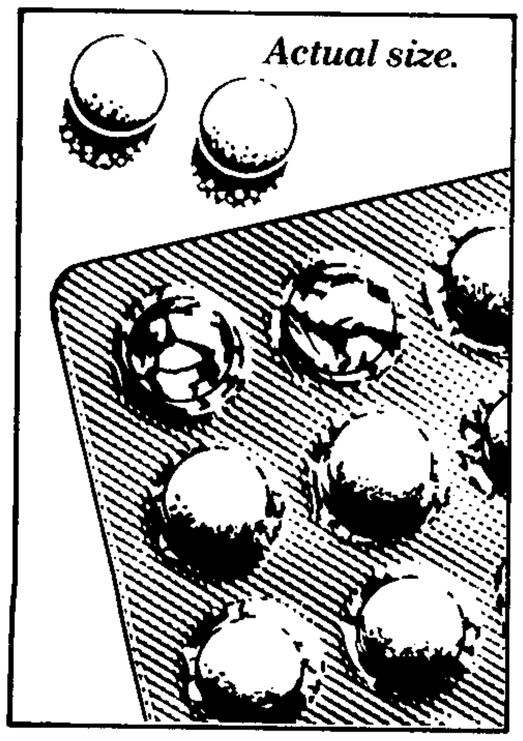

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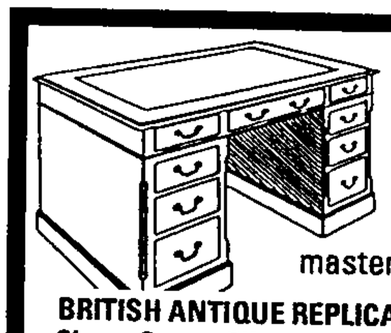

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FROM LITTLE ACORNS . . .

In 1295, Good King Vaclav II of Bohemia founded the town of Pilsen. He was certainly an affable old ruler and granted numerous privileges to the town's inhabitants. One of these being the right to brew beer. According to ancient folklore, the readiness of the beer was tested in a rather bizarre way. Inspectors would pour the beer onto oak benches, then sit on it in leather breeches. Apparently, if the beer stuck to the leather it meant the brew was of the required density. Of course, these were humble beginnings indeed in the art of beer-making. But it was the start of a wonderful brewing history for the town of Pilsen. For in 1842 the world's first lager was invented in Pilsen. It was called Pilsner Urquell. Very quickly its popularity grew and grew. Soon, many other brewers throughout Europe, and indeed the world, produced their own brews in the "Pilsner-style". Today, of course, lager brewing has grown into a mighty business. However, for some people only the original from Pilsen is good enough. Clearly they are well aware of our roots. Pilsner Urquell

Gnome Strobes

I WOULD first of all like to clear up a few matters arising from recent revelations about the late Lord Gnome in the gutter press.

1. Although I was his personal assistant for 30 years, I barely knew him at all.

2. Although I sat on the board of a number of his companies, I had no idea of how he conducted his business.

3. Although I edited many of his newspapers, I never knew what was in them.

4. Although I wrote a biography of Gnome entitled *St Gnome, The Prince of Peace*, I had no inkling of the type of man he was.

It was, therefore, a terrible shock to me to discover that I had lost my pension. Words cannot describe how betrayed I felt.

A man guilty of theft from his own staff can have had no morals at all. How could Lord Gnome have sunk so low as to steal from the very people who worked faithfully for him, asked no awkward questions, took his money, agreed with whatever he said and attacked anyone who did not?

It is almost impossible to believe. What an appalling liar and fraud I am *(shurely 'he was'? Sub-Editor)*.

E. Strobes
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COLOUR SECTION

● *Lockerbie Special – p. 13.*

PENSION NEWS

LAST OCTOBER, just over a fortnight before his death, Robert Maxwell issued a libel writ against *Private Eye* for an article we published in August drawing attention to his manipulation of the Macmillan Inc. and Mirror Group pension funds.

In particular, the writ complained that we had suggested Maxwell was "personally responsible" for acting unlawfully in relation to the Mirror Group pension fund.

It was not the first time the *Eye* had drawn attention to Cap'n Bob's tendency to run his employees' pension funds for his own benefit. In November 1985 (*Eye* 623) we explained that the Mirror Group pension fund, which under previous owners Reed International had regularly yielded interest in double figures, was, under Robert Maxwell, producing a measly 3 per cent: "In the halcyon days of yesteryear, Reed's investment specialists regularly consulted the trustees to the fund, consisting of management and union representatives, on how their money was being used." The practice was rather different under Cap'n Bob.

In August 1987 (*Eye* 670) we wrote about the Thomson Withy Grove pension fund (Maxwell had bought the contract printing company, which printed the northern edition of the *Daily Mirror*, from International Thomson). During 1985, the chairman of the fund, George Dunn, who was also managing director of the company, failed to hold a meeting of trustees or to pay out any improvements from the £8.2 million surplus the fund had earned.

The reason was that Dunn was already negotiating to sell the company to Cap'n Bob and he had made it clear he would only buy on the basis that the fund did not distribute the surplus. The fund's actuary had written to the secretary on 25 October 1985 urging that pension values be upgraded by 16 per cent. Maxwell never made good this shortfall and subsequently decreed that the fund be lumped in with the BPCC pension fund, allowing him to pocket the surplus.

The Mirror Group pensioners had similar problems. Maxwell was within his rights to declare a holiday for corporate contributions to the MGN pension fund almost as soon as he bought the company. However, long before he decided dishonestly to transfer millions out of the fund, he had resolved to bleed employees in other ways; and he consistently blocked requests by the journalists to admit the father of the *Mirror*'s NUJ chapel, Steve Turner, to the board of trustees.

In March 1990, Turner wrote to Maxwell asking him to intervene in the early retirement scheme because some journalists were not receiving full benefit. These included those who had put their savings into additional voluntary contributions (AVCs), those who paid for additional pension while working on the Sunday titles, and those who had given long service from an early age. Turner also informed Maxwell that the pensions office had miscalculated the entitlements of certain journalists classified as managerial employees and cited the example of one journalist who was being deprived of £2,750 per annum: "We are worried that hundreds of former employees may have been disadvantaged as well. In conclusion, our request is simply that journalists should be given the full early retirment benefit you intended them to have. The present difficulties are threatening to sour your warm-hearted scheme."

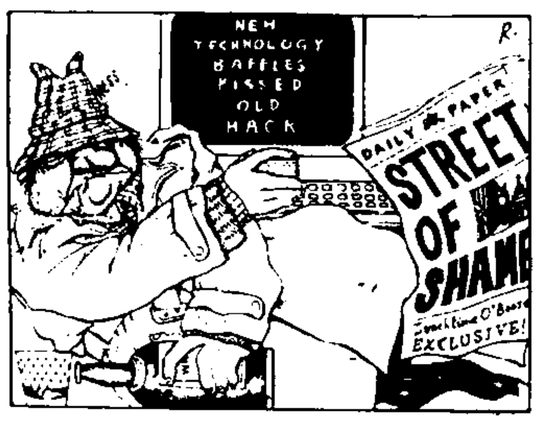
The miscalculation referred to by Turner had been discovered by Pat Smyllie, a *Daily Mirror* feature writer and employee of 31 years' standing. She had written to Turner suggesting that he "ask relevant members to check their figures with regard to this point to ensure at least that they get the correct basic entitlement based on British accounting principles. The NUJ Chapel paid £10,000 out of union funds to retain an actuary, Sedgewick Financial Services, to go through the figures.

Pat Smyllie was hauled up in front of one of Cap'n Bob's trusted lieutenants, the sinisterly-titled "group human resources director", Robert Gregory. She explained to him that she thought MGN journalists were working under British law and not in some sweatshop in the Carpathian Mountains.

Another problem was that the pension department under Trevor Cook always refused to provide complainants with any paperwork, so that Smyllie was obliged to phone a man at home whose daughter was a clerk in the department and was able to consult the relevant files in her lunch hour. Pat Smyllie was dismissed on 31 August, and few believe this was unconnected with her championship of pensioners' rights in the teeth of hostility of Cap'n Bob and the pliable Trevor Cook.

It was in August that we also revealed that Maxwell had appointed his own company, London & Bishopsgate International, to manage the pension fund of his US publishing arm, Macmillan Inc. Macmillan's pension fund was now paying 0.25 per cent more in management fees to LIB than had previously been paid to the Citibank Fixed Income and Fidelity Magellan funds (not owned by Maxwell) and its growth performance was several percent less than those funds had achieved. Just another instance of Cap'n Bob's willingness to make light with pensioners' money.

"We've got room but it'll cost you"



SO, FAREWELL then, *The European*... and farewell also to a slew of unsavoury hacks.

● Deputy editor **James McManus.** It has often been said that Robert Redford is the thinking woman's James McManus. He used to be married to Churchill's granddaughter, hackette Emma Soames, and is now married to a South African heiress (favourite *bon mot*: "I married my first wife for her connections and my second for her money"). He enjoys a small sideline as a screenwriter and adapted Gerald Seymour's *Red Fox* for TV ("Of course, I did most of it."). On his orders, *Le Pisspauvre* ran a huge puff-piece about this lamentable drama when it was first broadcast last May and again two weeks ago, before it was repeated. In the last, desperate days of the paper, McAnus was to be heard shouting at hacks for the phone numbers of potential buyers, including Kerry Packer, Tony O'Reilly and the *South China Morning Post* (unaware that it is owned by Murdoch).

● **Peter Millar** left the staff several months ago but was retained at phenomenal expense as a columnist. He turned up in the *Pisspauvre*'s office a few days before its demise on assignment for the *Daily Torygraph* (which he is hoping will offer him a full-time position). The *Torygraph* didn't use his tedious copy. *Pisspauvre* newsdesk hack Roman Rollnick approached Millar and asked if he knew of any jobs going elsewhere. "Fuck off!" was the reply. Millar, who claims to be owed £14,000 by the paper, should seek a career in counselling.

● **Lionel Stoleru**, former French minister of planning employed on an exorbitant salary of approximately £200,000 to be economics editor. He rang up managing editor Alan Thompson a couple of weeks ago demanding three months' severance pay. Thompson was not able to oblige. *Quel dommage*!

● **David Blake**, one of the founders and destroyers of the *Sunday Correspondent*. He was made associate editor of *Le Pisspauvre* in its final month. Walking around in his socks, he was talking ever more optimistically about the future until the moment the administrator made him redundant.

● **John Bryant**, former coach of Zola Budd, and one of the few men privileged to close two national newspapers. He pleaded with the staff to work unpaid for a final edition (it never came out), seemingly unaware that most had not been paid since 15 November.

● Lucky escape: Former *Sunset Times* and *Sunday Corrie* hack **Simon Freeman**, who walked two months before closure with a five-month pay-off (around £20,000). At first, the cheque bounced, but after hasty negotiations it went through in the nick of time.

All in all, a glorious chapter in journalistic history: *The European*'s lifespan fell somewhat short of the 1,000 years the bombastic Maxwell predicted.

GOOD to see Tiny Rowland claiming in the *Times* that he never interferes in the editorial line of his newspapers.

When Rowland wanted to buy the *Evening Standard* he was asked whether he was interested editorially. He said "never" and added: "I don't even interfere with the choice of editor. With my African papers I phone the minister of the interior and leave the choice up to him".

PAUL Dacre, the increasingly brilliant editor of the *Evening Standard*, is growing weary of the infantile right-wing posturing of his chief leader-writer, the Hon Christopher Monckton.

In a recent memo to Monckton he warned the loopy viscount-to-be that the paper's editorials were far too Thatcherite. Monckton fired off an indignant reply in which he accused Dacre of "interfering with my staff".

This strange accusation turned out to be a reference to the *Standard*'s other two leader-writers, Melanie McDonough and Peter "World's Worst Columnist" McHackey. Dacre was then obliged to send a message pointing out that McDonough and McHackey were his staff, not Monckton's.

The Hon Christopher has now retaliated with a 5,000 word memo setting out what he laughably describes as his political philosophy. Will it be enough to save his skin? Watch this space.

IN AN anguished letter to *The Grauniad*, Peter Mandelson writes: "The *Mirror's* newspapers are going to pass into new ownership hands. Does it matter who these hands belong to? Most certainly, yes, and not just to the Labour Party."

It matters particularly to Peter Mandelson, who writes a deadbeat column in Mirror Group's *The People*. The new owner might well decide that the space — and the money — could be better employed without him.

THE *Sun* has been up to its old light-fingered tricks again.

"I've finally twigged how the BBC plans to blast the 'new' *Top of the Pops* back up the ratings," wrote gormless pop music hack Piers Morgan at the top of his column on 27 November. "New titles (imaginatively modelled on the old ones), new studio set (imaginatively modelled on the old one), new presenters (imaginatively modelled on the old ones, only worse)..." There was plenty more in this "humorous" vein.

Piers was clearly assuming that none of his readers would have seen the latest issue of *Sky* magazine, on sale from 11 November, which included a jokey feature on "How to revitalise *Top of the Pops*". Its suggestions? "New titles imaginatively modelled on the old ones. New studio set imaginatively..." And so on, *verbatim*.

Not that Piers's rival at the *Mirror*, the absurdly-named Rick Sky, is any better. On 4 December, Rick revealed that "Kenny Thomas once starred in an amateur stage production of *Joseph and His Technicolor Dreamcoat*". But most *Mirror* readers were already well aware of this fact — not least because the story had already appeared in Rick Sky's column the previous day!

THE RECENT unexpected drop of some 25 pence in the share price of United Newspapers, parent company of the *Express* titles, can be attributed in part to an article in the *Daily Telegraph* which drew attention to the well-known links between Lord Stevens, United's chairman, and the late Robert Maxwell.

Rumours then abounded. It was said that David Stevens was an executor of the Maxwell will, which he has denied; and, more ominously it was even alleged, inaccurately, that some of the missing pension money had found its way into Stevens's Invesco MIM, a pension fund investment company with some £32 billion pounds under management.

Another article purporting to investigate the Maxwell-Stevens links appeared in the *Sunday Telegraph*'s City pages, written by Robert Tyerman. It was a scissors and paste job which relied on little more than well-known public pronouncements and press releases.

The man behind the *Telegraph*, of course, is none other than the Canadian Conrad Black, the "Montreal Moosehead", who holds, through the *Telegraph*'s Canadian parent, Hollinger Inc, some 9.6 percent of the share capital of United. Black bought the shares at a market peak, an "investment" thought to have cost him around £40 million so far. Clearly he is holding on not because he is completely stupid, but because at some time he will make a bid.

While on the subject of pension funds, Maxwell was not the only one in Fleet Street to show an excessive interest: there was also... Conrad Black.

Dominion Group comprised a series of corner shops in Ontario when the Canadian took them over. In those days his main activity was asset stripping and he set about the group with a vengeance. After shutting stores and making staff redundant, he boldly proclaimed that because there were now fewer staff, the pension fund was surplus to the needs of those remaining — and so the surplus belonged to the company!

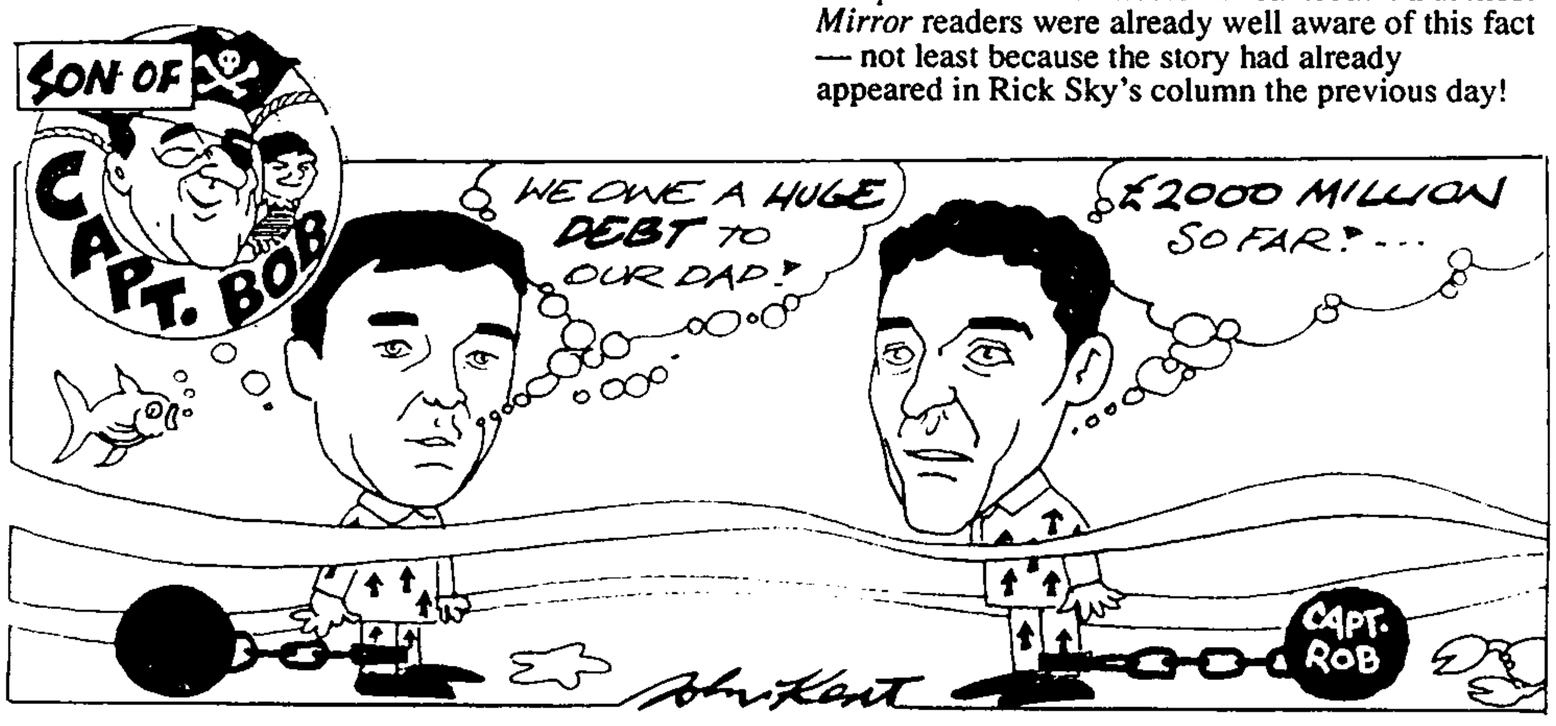
The Canadian shopworkers' union did not like the idea of their funds being seized and took Black to court to recover $37,951. The Ontario high court agreed with the workers. At the time Black was described by the now Ontario Premier Bob Rae as "that most symbolic representative of bloated capitalism at its worst".

PARANOIA has set in at the *Grauniad*, where a full-scale "leak inquiry" is trying to identify the authors of a devastating 4,000 word exposé of the newspaper's recent history.

The anonymous article appears in the dummy issue of *Casablanca*, a new mag which grandly claims to defy "the stultifying conformity and mendacious humbuggery which characterise our times". What has caused something near panic at the *Grauniad* is that it was clearly compiled with the help of people inside the paper's office.

The piece has clearly struck a nerve. For instance, it mocks the *Weekend Guardian*'s obsession with stories about sex or murder, or preferably both, and its shameless puffing of films and books. At a features meeting last Monday the weekend section's editor, Roger Alton, was asked what he had in store. "Oh, the usual serial-killer stories and PR puffs," he said sourly.

More alarming for the paper's enigmatic Peter Preston is the fact that many of the newspaper's staff have been murmuring discreetly that they quite agree with the *Casablanca* article — and in particular its criticisms of his long reign.



Mr Joe Haines

IN *EYE* 767 we published an article which suggested that Mr Haines had changed the terms of his employment with Mirror Group Newspapers in order to qualify for preferential shares in the company's flotation on the Stock Market. We are satisfied that Mr Haines did no such thing and are happy to apologise to him for any embarrassment which has been caused by any suggestion to the contrary and to pay damages and his costs in full. We also apologise for the untrue reference in the article to Mrs Haines which should not have been made.

FRANTIC efforts are being made to prevent BR chairman Sir Bob Reid from resigning when the government's crazy white paper on rail privatisation is published in the new year.

It was due to appear before Christmas, but Sir Bob's threatened resignation has postponed it. Although waiting for Reid's temper to cool (as it quickly did over the amazing Channel Tunnel rail link *volte face*), the government has refused to drop its plans to dismember the rail system and replace it with a hotch-potch of "competitive" services run by private operators.

No wonder Reid is angry. His job (which he only started in April) has been changed utterly. With his private sector experience (he was chairman of Shell UK), and a salary to match it (£240,000 a year on top of his £100,000 Shell pension), he was supposed to make BR more efficient and less unpopular — by initiating the same kind of "internal market" reforms which the government is attempting in the NHS. Now he is being expected to preside over a series of auctions.

He is appalled that the government has ignored studies commissioned by BR — and by Whitehall — which have come out strongly against even the more logical forms of privatisation, such as the "track authority" and regional rail companies. The government's disintegration plan is crazier by far than any of these. When its implications have been digested, Labour will have a new trump card in its hand.

Passengers have suffered much. But can they be cheered by the thought of having to rely on private operators who may run trains only when they can be sure of filling enough seats; losing the present nationwide "rail card" system, which provides cheap rail travel; buying tickets from bucket shops and having to consult umpteen rival timetables to plan a complicated rail journey?

Of one thing they can be certain. There will be far fewer trains after this shamelessly anti-social policy is implemented.

THE GUEST list for a dinner of 26 prominent Asians at Downing Street last month made interesting reading. It included one person whose company is named in a criminal investigation in India in connection with a huge arms kickback scandal.

The name of Gopichand P. Hinduja, one of four brothers in the family considered to be the 12th richest in Britain, figures along with that of a Hinduja company in investigations by India's Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) into the $16 million kickback scandal surrounding the purchase of howitzer guns by India from AB Bofers, the Swedish armaments manufacturer in 1987.

Last year the CBI gave a list of 14 persons and organisations, including those of G.P. Hinduja and Sangam, a Hinduja company, to the Swiss authorities as those they believed had some connection with the labyrinthine kickback scandal in which millions of dollars were paid into coded Swiss bank accounts. The case is still under investigation.

The Hindujas, headquartered in New Zealand House in London's Haymarket, have access to the highest in British politics. It was no doubt their clout in the Asian community that prompted Mr Major, who is seeking both money and the Asian vote, to invite them to dinner.

The family, it is believed, was instrumental in deciding the guest list which included Amitabh Bachcahn, India's best known film star, and Ajitabh, his businessman brother. Their own Indian Festival of Lights party held at the V&A early last month was attended by Douglas Hurd, Neil Kinnock and Sir David Steel; and they are reported to have known Richard Helms, the former CIA director, and William P. Clark, a close friend of former President Reagan.

While the Hindujas are known for their philanthropy — including, some suspect, to the Tory party — the source of their huge wealth has never been fully established. They claim to be into "everything from oil to cars."

NOTHING has embarrassed the Ministry of Defence more than the recent massacre of protesting women and children in the occupied territory of East Timor in the South Pacific.

The troops responsible had their orders from the government of Indonesia, which provides more business for the British arms industry than any other government on earth. In the old days, when the Government, through its wholly-owned subsidiary International Military Sales, benefited directly from British arms sales abroad, a huge and special effort was made to ensure that British suppliers would always be considered first providers of the Indonesian dictatorship's armaments.

A great deal of those arms are used for the continued slaughter and suppression of the people of East Timor, which was entered in 1974 by the Indonesian government with rather the same respect for international law and the United Nations that Saddam Hussein displayed in Kuwait in 1990.

The parallel never occurred to the Ministry of Defence, which continued to sponsor sales to Indonesia. In September this year (when people had stopped talking about the Gulf War) Secretary of State for Defence Tom King made a special and rather cautious visit to Indonesia to drum up more arms sales. Whether any of the arms he sold were used in the East Timor massacre he really, honestly, cannot say.

NOW that Fields and Nellist have been expelled from the Labour Party for being socialists, the Sparts are determined to maximise the "fuck-up factor".

Their best bet for depriving Labour of winnable seats will be on Militant Murkeyside.

Fields himself will stand in Broadgreen, ensuring the seat falls to Lib-Dem Rosie "Roly-poly" Cooper. They'll stand Lesley Mahmood against the hated Peter Kilfoyle in Walton again and put someone up against Charlie Drake lookalike Bob Wareing in West Derby. Labour will get shafted, too, in the Liberal marginal of Mossley Hill, making sure David Alton hangs on to the seat.

Militant challenges to official Labour candidates are most unlikely in the other two Liverpool seats, Riverside and Garston, which are held by Bob Parry and Eddie Loyden respectively.

The Kinnockites claim that no one in the PLP now supports Militant. But the Tendency supported Parry for years.

Parry is a somewhat eccentric MP who makes regular visits to Iraq and Libya on "mercy missions". The table in his surgery is littered with crumpled House of Commons note paper containing chocolate drops which he feeds to his decrepit dog. A strong anti-abortion catholic, he owes his reselection to Militant votes, despite a credible challenge from black left-winger Martha Osimore.

Eddie Loyden, for his part, failed to do any campaigning for Kilfoyle during the Walton by-election — the very charge that Fields was hung, drawn and quartered for. When asked which way he would vote Loyden said he didn't live in Walton, so the question was irrelevant!

CLARE SHORT presided over the Labour Party court which decided to expel Coventry South East MP Dave Nellist. Three months ago she was herself under threat, from what she called "the hard right", when the electricians' union EETPU flooded her constituency party with delegates in an attempt to put in a candidate more to their liking. She survived, thanks to support from the heavy mob at Walworth Road.

No one would be coarse enough to suggest a trade-off may have taken place. But her plight might not have been understood so sympathetically if she had been regarded as soft on dissidents. Particularly as she has a left-wing past.

NUCLEAR ELECTRIC has given a two-finger salute to energy secretary John Wakeham, who tried during the summer to stop it spending any of its £1,200 million subsidy on a lavish advertising campaign.

Wakeham managed to talk the company out of spending £7 million on telling the nation how nice nukes are. But last week NE took a three-page, £40,000 advert in the *Sunday Times* colour mag.

It was followed by full-page advertisements in the national dailies giving the six-month interim results, "of which we were particularly proud", said a spokesman. It showed higher "profits" of £208 million by ignoring the subsidy of £600 million during the six-month period and the cost of decommissioning its power stations (put at £10,000 million). NE says this is a liability inherited from the CEGB and should not be included; but it takes into account the money it makes selling nuclear power.

It remains a ruinous method of producing electricity — a fact which made Wakeham, an accountant, decide to shut down NE's programme and its misleading advertising. But with an election a few months away, he is being treated as a lame duck by the recipients of his charity.

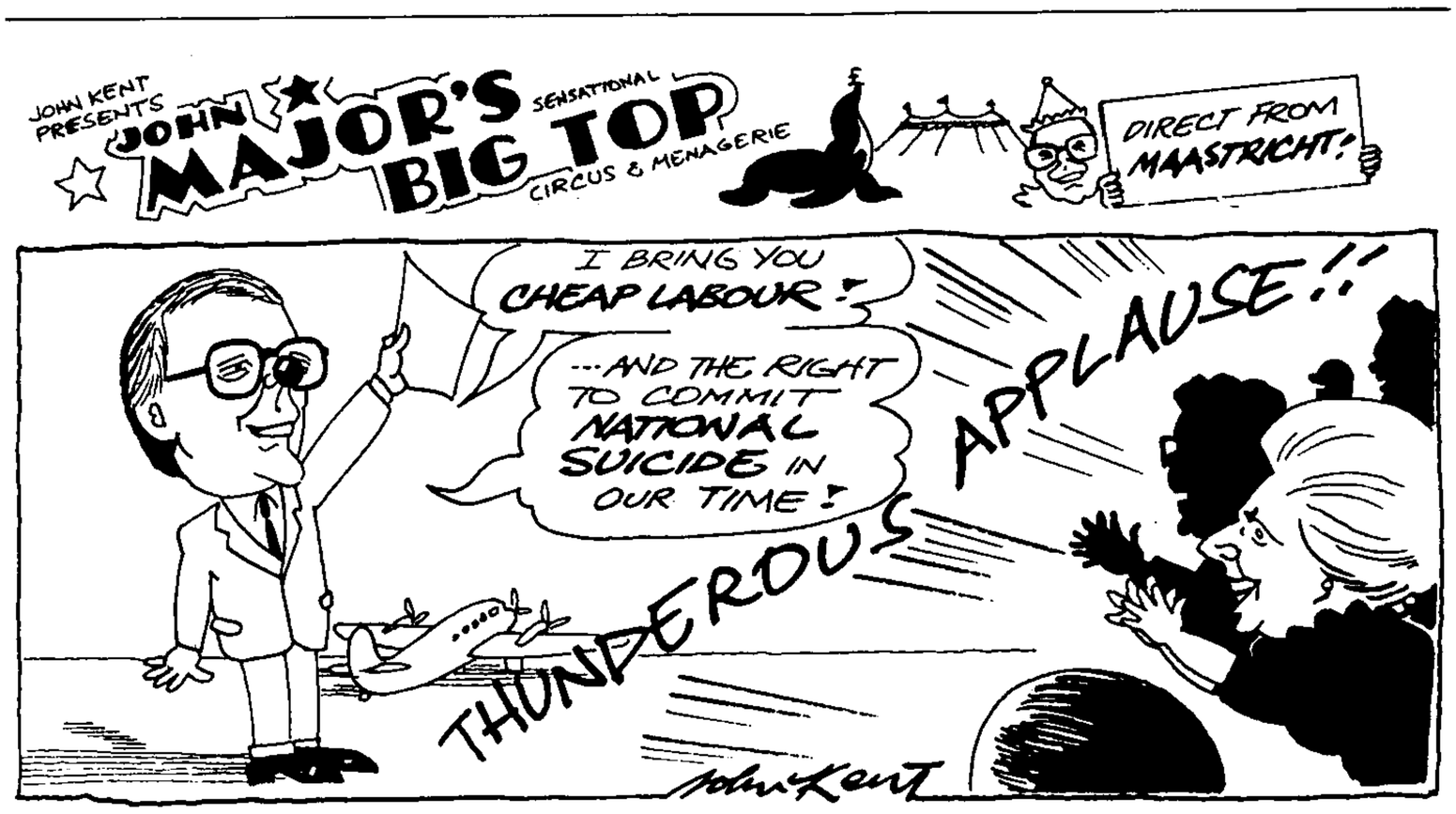
THE LATEST bastion of Thatcherism to fall into disrepute is the deregulation of the licensed drinks trade, the brainchild of Lord Young of Graffham during his time at the Department of Trade & Industry.

This deregulation — the so-called "beer orders" — was supposed to break the monopoly power of the brewing multinationals, giving customer choice and ensuring competition. The companies, in particular the Big Five — Courage, Whitbread, Allied, Bass and Grandmet — were required to reduce the number of pubs they owned to 2,500 each and get rid of the rest.

In fact they have dumped all their spare pubs on the market at exorbitant prices and have taken protectionist measures with their remaining houses setting them profit and volume targets. They require free-house holders to pay inflated prices and take inflated volumes of stock, for open market sales and to take other lines from them.

Lord Young has thus ensured the survival of a slimmed down and more expensive public house sector, even more dominated by the Big Five than before.

'Backbiter'


JOHN KENT PRESENTS
JOHN MAJOR'S SENSATIONAL BIG TOP CIRCUS & MENAGERIE
DIRECT FROM MAASTRICHT!
I BRING YOU CHEAP LABOUR!
...AND THE RIGHT TO COMMIT NATIONAL SUICIDE IN OUR TIME!
APPLAUSE!!
THUNDEROUS
John Kent

Grovel's GRAND — HUMBUG AWARDS —

3rd Prize

"Another side of Maxwell's character that he has succeeded in hiding totally from public view enables him to be an exceptionally able chairman of committees, the best in my personal experience... The *Mirror* Pensions Board consists of half management, half trade union nominees. Maxwell, as chairman, has the casting vote. The balance is therefore tipped, as it always was, in favour of the management, but his conduct of the meetings was impeccable in my experience as a board member. When he does not hold all the aces, he will listen, persuade and respond"

— *Goodbye, Fleet Street* by ex-*Sunday Mirror* editor Bob Edwards (Jonathan Cape, 1988).

"He could never be trusted. Anyone who knew Maxwell knew he could not be trusted. And anyone who says otherwise is a craven liar. I remember people telling me that if he could get his hands on the pension fund, he would... In the end the pension fund was run by Maxwell and his lickspittles and the trustees were kept in the dark"

— ex-*Sunday Mirror* editor Bob Edwards, the *Sun*, 6 December 1991.

2nd Prize

"Maxwell is a hard man with a sharp nose for extravagance, waste and freeloading of any kind... Maxwell has many and grievous faults, but no one would deny his courage, willpower and, above all, willingness to take decisions and give a lead. I don't care a damn about his early business record or what the Board of Trade said about him umpteen years ago. That is all ancient history"

— Paul Johnson, *The Spectator*, 21 July 1984

"Robert Maxwell... this evil man... arch-criminal... since Maxwell had been judged unfit to run a public company as long ago as 1971, what were the various registrators doing while he built up his crazy pyramid of debt and fraud... How did a man like Maxwell, who had This Man Is Dangerous written all over him in letters two feet high manage to persuade senior bank executives to hand over to him hundreds of millions of their depositors' money? Who exactly were these generous, gullible fellows? What is their explanation? And are they being dealt with?"

— Paul Johnson, *Daily Mail*, 7 December 1991

1st Prize

"There are those who praise *Eye* on the grounds that it has changed the way this generation views its public men, not only by making fun of them, but also by implying they habitually have their noses in the public trough and act for personal financial or private motives. But is this really a matter for praise? Does it really make a valuable contribution to our society to destroy both in our own eyes, and in those of the world at large, our major national asset of incorruptibility in public life — to replace it by a belief that the instincts of the piggery motivate our public servants and successful entrepreneurs."

— Robert Maxwell, reviewing *The Private Eye Story*, November 1982, in *The Listener*.

BUGGERY

JOHN POLE, nicknamed The Bugger by the *Daily Mirror* when it found he had planted bugs in the offices of Maxwell's favourite business colleagues, is better known to *Eye* readers as the Scotland Yard officer in charge of the ridiculous case against Michael Aspin and others, whose "crime" was that they sought to sell arms to the ayatollahs at the behest of Colonel Oliver North and his henchmen (see *Eyes passim*).

Pole retired from the police before the case came to court and was replaced by a fellow Detective Chief Superintendent, Ron Melvin — the man who has just won acclaim for his handling of the prosecution of Winston Silcott in the PC Blakelock murder case.

The Aspin case proved embarrassing for Pole. He was obliged to interview the former Lord Mayor of London, Sir Alan Traill, whose Lloyds underwriting agency, Lyon, Traill and Attenborough, had, according to the prosecution, allegedly played a crucial role in the fraud. William Harper, a broker at the agency, was charged and convicted of trying to finance an arms deal which never was, in spite of evidence that he had asked a senior official at the Ministry of Defence to inspect the missiles which were to be sold.

Sir Alan was never charged with anything. All Harper's meetings with Iranians had taken place in the offices of the firm without Sir Alan or anyone else there knowing anything about it.

Any allegation against Sir Alan would have been gravely damaging to freemasonry, in which Sir Alan, as a member of the old-established Prior Walter Lodge, is a great believer. John Pole, too, was a devoted freemason, and a member of the legendary Manor of St James's Lodge which at the time had among its members an assistant commissioner, two deputy assistant commissioners, 12 commanders and 10 superintendents of the Metropolitan Police.

After retiring from the police, Pole took charge of security at the Wapping HQ of News International. Rupert Murdoch, it is said, was not too impressed and almost signed up as Pole's successor Victor George Williams, then operating under an alias, George Wilson. Williams/Wilson has spent 40 of his 65 years in prison, and was on the run when he was taken on as chief security inspector at Heathrow airport — where he first caught the eye of Rupert Murdoch.

Williams turned down the Wapping job and was later picked up and reimprisoned, and Pole too was soon on the move again — to Murdoch's rival, Maxwell, who adored him. The two men became devoted to one another. There was nothing the one would not do for the other. When a series of hysterical secretaries had to be escorted out of the building after being fondled by the Great Lothario, Pole was always there with a firm hand and a soothing reassurance.

In the spring of 1990, Pole's car was spotted by traffic police and followed. Pole fled back to the *Mirror*, where security was so strict, under his orders, that he could not get into the vanway under the building. He was arrested hammering at the gate, and, protesting vigorously to his former colleagues, was hauled off to the police station. In June 1990 he was convicted by magistrates at Mansion House of refusing to give a blood test, fined £200 and banned from driving for three years.

Robert Maxwell, a gentle employer who always gave his workers the benefit of the doubt, was most distressed. He gave orders that his security chief was not to be inconvenienced by the driving ban, and from time to time Pole would take a taxi back to the more distant of his homes — near Oxford.

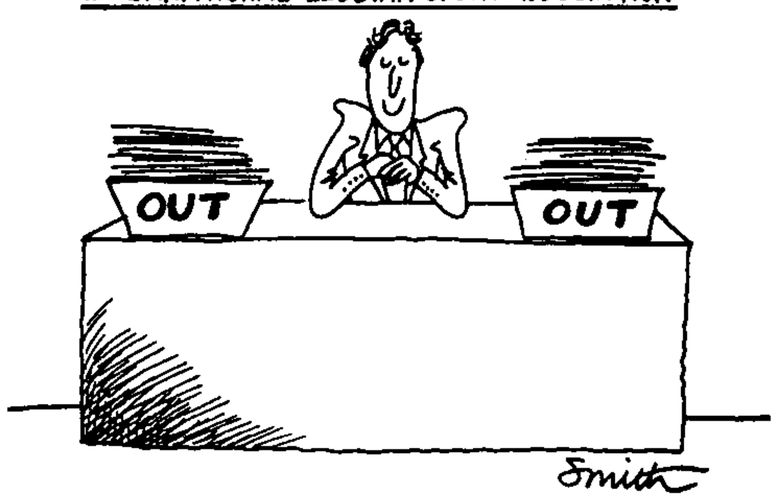
FRAUD

CAP'N BOB'S career as a fraudster did not begin in the late 1960s — the phase that culminated in the notorious DTI inspectors' report that branded him a liar and cheat — but in the mid-1950s with his acquisition of Simpkin Marshall, a British wholesale publishing house.

He agreed to assume £160,000 of the company's debt, though he only had to come up with £50,000 in cash. The remainder was to be paid in instalments by the company itself out of its trading revenue. Maxwell also persuaded a business acquaintance, Dr Kurt Wallersteiner, to put £470,000 into Simpkin Marshall.

But it was the way money flowed out of the company that was most interesting. By 1954 Simpkin Marshall had loaned £211,599 to other Maxwell-controlled companies on an interest-free basis. When Wallersteiner grew uneasy about the safety of his investment, he tried to call a meeting of creditors; but Maxwell obtained a court injunction to prevent Wallersteiner from communicating with other creditors after swearing an affidavit which claimed that the company had "an excess of current assets over current liabilities of approximately £450,000".

This was a lie. Only a month before a firm of accountants had found a deficiency in net tangible assets of £12,173. The company finally went under a year later with total debts of £556,249 and a bunch of worthless stock that had to be written off to the tune of £180,000. The official receiver's report, published in 1956, concluded that: "It appears doubtful whether the company was at any time solvent."



NOOKS and CORNERS

HOME HOUSE in Portman Square contains some of the most exquisite rooms in London. It was built in 1774-76 and designed by the great Robert Adam, the centenary of whose death is to be celebrated next year. For many years, it was the home of the Courtauld Institute of Art, and the elegant staircase in the glorious central hall was regularly used by that scholar and gentleman, the late Sir Anthony Blunt, for transporting bottles of gin to entertain the more aesthetical students in his room at the top. Those were the days when even ordinary mortals could penetrate the door of No. 21 Portman Square to admire the famous interior.

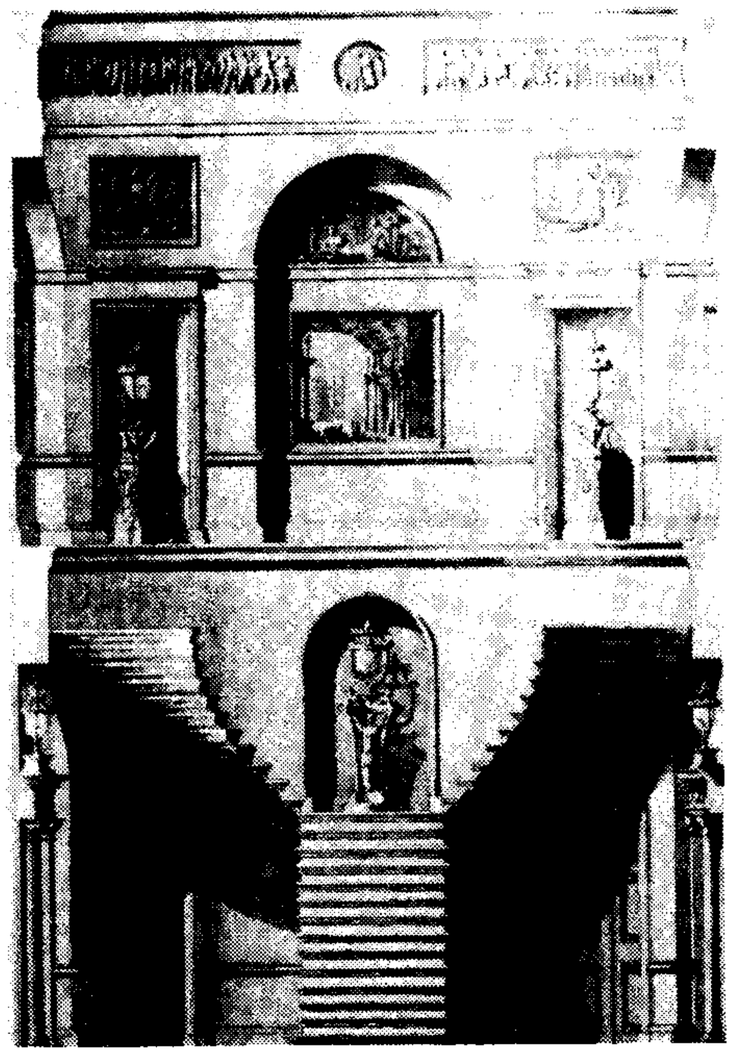
Sic transit gloria mundi. Home House is now closed and shuttered, for the Courtauld has gone to Somerset House. So what is to be done with it? To its credit, the National Trust realised that this was the opportunity many had been waiting for. Bath has its Georgian House in Royal Crescent. Edinburgh has one too, run by the National Trust for Scotland in the range in Charlotte Square designed by Adam. But, before Jacob Rothschild restored the much grander Spencer House, London did not possess a fine 18th Century town house regularly open to the public.

Home House was the answer. It is central, very close to the Wallace Collection. Its neighbour, 21 Portman Square, houses the RIBA's drawings collection, whose activities are complementary and whose exhibition gallery could be exploited. The National Trust recognised that the mews at the back of Home House could house the obligatory shop, while the fine interiors could be properly restored and furnished. The Queen was willing to lend portraits and the V&A promised furniture.

Everything seemed perfect; the Portman Estate was not prepared to sell the freehold, but the National Trust were negotiating to secure a long lease on the property so it could be an "enterprise" like Spencer House, paying its way during the week while being regularly open to the public.

Then a new agent was appointed by the Portman Estate — a Thatcherite who believes his duty is to make as much money as possible, regardless of the national or any other interest.

The agent is demanding so much money that the National Trust has pulled out of negotiations. Home House must now go to the highest bidder — probably some Arab government. The consequence will be that this glorious building will become an embassy, completely inaccessible to the public, festooned with security devices and liable to be set on fire in some terrorist incident. But, in modern Britain, money talks loudest.



20 Portman Square, detail of contemporary drawing showing section through the staircase.

So, in the year of Robert Adam's bicentenary, his wonderful London house will be lost to the public, and an imaginative cultural enterprise scuppered, entirely owing to the naked greed of the Portman Estate.

ANOTHER obstacle to making money is the continued existence of old burial grounds. These small open spaces, tucked away off busy streets, are among the secret pleasures of the City of London. Their historic and amenity value was recognised in the Disused Burial Grounds Act of 1884 and the Open Spaces Act of 1906, which ensured that they remain open spaces unless Parliament decides otherwise.

One such open space is the churchyard of St Benet Sherehog in Pancras Lane, a church not rebuilt after the Great Fire, whose parish was united with that of St Stephen Walbrook.

***Unfortunately, this ancient burial ground is inconveniently placed, for it lies in the middle of the site assiduously assembled by the late Rudolph Palumbo and his son Peter. Its irregular shape naturally interfered with the pure geometry of the plan of the Mies van der Rohe tower block whose excellence My Lord Palumbo wished to inflict upon Britain. It also gets in the way of James Stirling's meretricious "wireless set" which the City is to be graced with — thanks to successive Conservative environment secretaries** (Eyes Passim ad nauseam).*

But Palumbo never lets tiresome anomalies stand in his way. In 1961, the Revd Chad Varah, rector of St Stephen's Walbrook, promoted and obtained a private Act of Parliament to permit the sale and development of St Benet's churchyard, including the removal of human remains. It also allowed the promoter of the Act to recover all his costs from a developer. Needless to say, the churchyard was subsequently sold to one of Palumbo's companies. Oddly enough, Peter Palumbo was churchwarden of St Stephen's from 1961 until 1986 — in which capacity he imposed the Henry Moore "ripe camembert" sacrificial altar on the innocent Wren church.

Since 1961, the Church of England has prohibited such sales of burial grounds and the Diocese of London proclaims itself to be "shocked" by the provisions of the St Benet Act. But the Chairman of the Arts Council of Great Britain has never let trivial matters of public morality stand in the way of his obsessive artistic ambitions.

'Piloti'

Pseuds Corner

"HELLO, CENTRAL?"

Gender, Technology, and Culture in the Formation of Telephone Systems

Michèle Martin

In most studies of technological development, women are portrayed as passive victims of new technology. In contrast, in *"Hello, Central?"*, Michèle Martin reveals the significant impact women had on the development of the telephone systems.

McGILL-QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY PRESS ad

HOW DEEPLY the name Bryan Adams now resonates — the surname with its nod to the first man, the beginning of all life; the Christian name not Brian as in Tilsley or Clough, but *Bryan* with that special sense of crisp Canadian otherness that comes from being Bryan with a "Y".

BEN THOMPSON
Independent on Sunday

He [Umberto Eco] works with fountain pen or word processor. "Some things have to be written with an old fountain pen. You need the flow of ink, you need to wait for the ink to dry to allow time for the thoughts to travel on to paper. Some things have to be put down immediately on the computer. I don't use a typewriter any more. I think a computer is more spiritual. It works with you and is silent."

Guardian

Once after a frustrating and annoying meeting at the Marco Polo building, I savagely tore a flower out of its arrangement and symbolically flushed it down the scented toilet. Several female BSB executives looked startled, while two other independent producers applauded and cried out: "Right on!"

CHERYL MARKOVSKY
Television Week

LEN CLATWORTHY ✹ SCULPTURE

Somewhere between the beginning and the end, is a special place, where technique & ability are a hindrance to creativity. This is the area I am exploring.

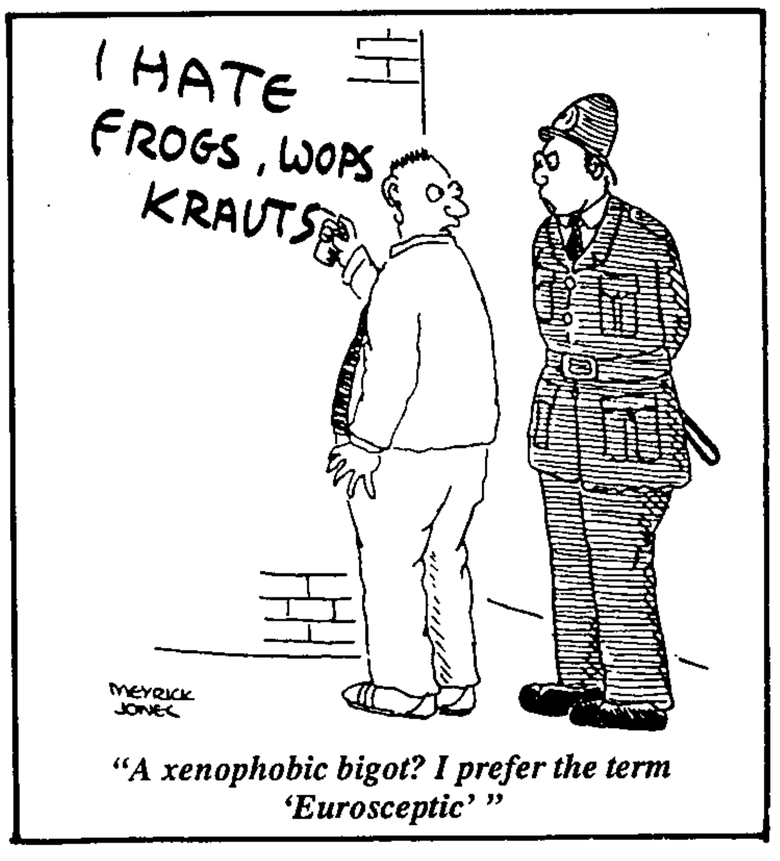
CHRISTMAS EXHIBITION
Shaftesbury Hall, Cheltenham

To have been the lover of Edith Piaf and Marilyn Monroe, the husband of Simone Signoret, the confidant of John-Paul Sartre and Picasso, puts [Yves] Montand in a very special place in the culture of the late 20th century.

ROBIN SMITH
Observer

CONTRIBUTORS: David Milsted, Marcus Berkmann, Jon Sapsed, David Gear, Tom Clancy, E.D.J. Hay.

£10 paid for entries



"A xenophobic bigot? I prefer the term 'Eurosceptic' "

TV

Top of the Pops (BBC1)

The Chart Show (ITV)

IN THE 1991 Reith Lectures, the geneticist Dr Steve Jones pointed out that average life-expectancy had stayed virtually the same for the last two decades, despite major medical advances.

He used the statistic to rule out the idea that death is endlessly more deferrable, with 21st century citizens living to the age of 150 or 200. It rather seemed now, he suggested, that there was only so much you could do to keep a body going and our generation had come up against the end-boards.

For some reason this argument came to mind while watching television's two music chart programmes. Despite advances in technology, despite developments in graphics, despite new trends in music, it is increasingly clear that only so much can be done to the body of the show.

For example, *Top of the Pops* — the BBC show, which is now so old that it was once introduced by Tony Blackburn and David Hamilton in flowered shirts, talking about something called "the hit parade" — has recently launched its latest revamp. There is now more live music — or, anyway, bands in the studio with their instruments — in place of the video explosion of the '80s. The presenters' roster will no longer contain only Radio 1 disc jockeys plugging their programmes. And, most innovatively, the programme will no longer build to a tense climax with the revelation of the Number One record.

The last decision is an overdue acknowledgment that any music fan who listens to the radio, reads a tabloid or enters a record shop between Tuesday and Thursday would be aware of the chart in some detail by the time they watch the television. However, the programme's solution to the problem is indicative of its wider difficulties. In a brilliant imaginative switch, the Top Ten is now breathlessly dispensed at the beginning of the programme.

It seems not to have occurred to anyone that one of the problems with the show is its dependence on the chart. Why might there not be more new releases before they arrive in the chart? Why must it be a programme restricted only to singles? Might not a band with a hit single be invited to perform another track from an album? *Top of the Pops* — its stick-in-mud tendencies exposed by its groaningly dated title — is still behaving as if its function is what it used to be. In the beginning, it provided fans with a first sight of performers heard on the radio. Now, though, with MTV and the release of cheap rock videos for home use, the format depends on a false assumption.

The Chart Show — the ITV answer — has a sharpness which results from its more recent birthdate. It is a riskier gig altogether. There is still some chart-dependency, but specialist listings — for example, rock — run alongside the main parade. There is a "vintage video" sequence and information about the groups is street-portered across the screen on captions. Captions stand in for presenters and there are brief previews of acts to be featured later in the show. Unlike its BBC equivalent, the programme has a sense of urgency and the possibility that some of the production team are under 40.

Yet, even here, there is a sense that music broadcasting has moved on: to specialist channels, videos and late-night shows. And, perhaps, there is a wider problem, which is that — perhaps because of the recession — there is a clear suggestion that the record-buying public is currently somewhat safe and middle-aged. What use the pacey, zany new formats when — as last week — the top performers in the charts are Elton John, Diana Ross and Tammy Wynette, with Queen, Status Quo, Rod Stewart and Cliff Richard not far behind? Pity *The Chart Show* when the modish Guns n' Roses are discovered to be performing a Paul McCartney number "Live and Let Die". As with geneticists, television music show producers may have discovered that they are up against the end-boards of the form.

'Square Eyes'

MEDIA NEWS

DESPERATE Sky TV's biggest hit recently has been the Kennedy rape trial. So keen were Sky bosses to get even more viewers to tune into the courtroom sleaze that they insisted on trailing the trial in the middle of their other programmes.

This applied, even after protest, to Sky's other most-watched output: the children's programmes. Tasteful, no?

MIRROR hacks who clustered round office televisions on Friday 6 December in anticipation of the latest Maxwell revelations were puzzled by a section of the BBC's *Six O'Clock News*.

"Fraud Squad officers today removed documents from MCC's London headquarters," said the newsreader, over pictures of men putting cardboard boxes into a van.

The men carrying the boxes, however, were familiar to the hacks as staff from the *Daily Mirror* cuttings library. Why had they assisted the police with their inquiries in this burdensome manner, one was asked later in the *Mirror* pub, the Stab in the Back.

"We weren't," he said. "We were just moving a load of old library stock down to the warehouse. This BBC crew dashed up and started filming us. We told them we weren't the law — but they carried on anyway."

INDEPENDENT Television News's money-spinning wheeze this Christmas is a "unique video tribute" called *Hostage* (£10.99) made up of "exclusive ITN footage" of the release of Terry Waite and his fellow captives.

This is *chutzpa* on a grand scale. For the recent hostage releases have not, to put it mildly, been *News at Ten*'s finest hour.

ITN had been planning its coverage of Waite's release for years. It had special files on its BASYS computer system detailing how the story should be reported and by whom. For the past two years it had kept a satellite dish in Damascus (cost: $10,000 a month) solely for the purpose of relaying pictures of Terry Waite.

The minute it heard that he had finally been freed, ITN chartered a plane to Damascus. There were about 20 people on board, including the great Trevor McDonald and the team that had handled the famously botched coverage of John McCarthy's arrival at Lyneham.

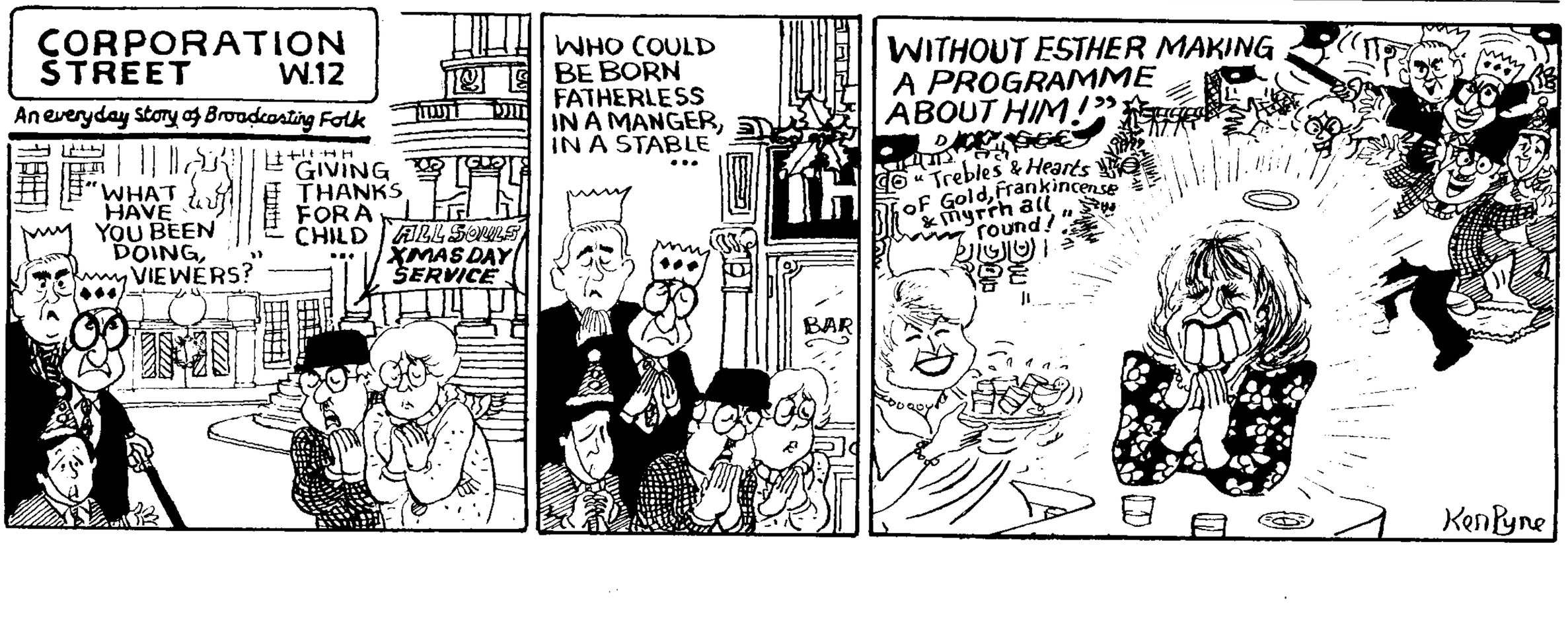
Alas! The release happened so quickly the plane couldn't get to Syria in time. So, thinking Waite could spend a couple of days in Cyprus, most of the ITN hacks and crews were dropped in Larnaca, from where poor old Trevor presented *News at Ten*. (He managed about 30 seconds on air before being mercifully terminated.) The plane then flew on to Damascus with three people on board; it arrived at about midnight, having completely missed the moment of release. The total cost of this jaunt was about £50,000.

Meanwhile, 20 other hacks in Cyprus — from CNN, BBC, ABC, *The Times*, *Daily Express*, etc — had clubbed together and hired a plane which got them to the Syrian capital in time. It cost £7,000 and worked out at a modest £350 a head.

To add to ITN's misery, Brent Sadler, who recently left to join CNN, managed to scoop his old employers by getting a private five minutes with Terry before the press conference. (While setting up the conference, the Syrians turned off the lights in an attempt to quieten the seething horde of hacks; Sadler took the opportunity to slip through an open door and find Waite, who is a friend of his.) To further gnashing of teeth from ITN, CNN organised a live broadcast of Waite's reappearance which lasted for over an hour.

After this fiasco ITN's Robert Moore and his crew sat in Damascus for 10 days, hoping they might at least catch the release of an American hostage. Alas again! ITN bosses in London finally ordered Moore back to Cyprus, where he arrived on 30 November. The very next day, Joseph Ciccipio's kidnappers announced they would free their captive within a day or two. So could Moore go back to Syria? Not at all. ITN told him instead to fly to Israel to report on some Arab prisoners who had just been released. (Since they had already left the country there wasn't much to report, but no matter.) Moore dutifully chartered a plane to Israel — which broke down before it could even take off.

In the next few days, the remaining American captives were freed in quick succession — Ciccipio, Steen and Anderson. Alert viewers of *News at Ten* may have noticed that all these events were covered by hacks in London. After the long years of contingency planning, ITN had been taken completely by surprise.


CORPORATION STREET W.12
An everyday story of Broadcasting Folk
"WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN DOING, VIEWERS?"
GIVING THANKS FOR A CHILD ...
ALL SOULS XMAS DAY SERVICE
WHO COULD BE BORN FATHERLESS IN A MANGER, IN A STABLE ...
BAR
WITHOUT ESTHER MAKING A PROGRAMME ABOUT HIM!"
"Trebles & Hearts of Gold, Frankincense & Myrrh all round!"
Ken Pyne

ARMS NEWS

THE WEATHER has been very unkind to international travellers. Why else would Prince Bandar, the Saudi ambassador to Washington and son of Saudi defence minister Prince Sultan, divert his aircraft, a sumptuous 707 which has just had a $50 million refit, from London to Manchester?

Bandar flew in recently with an entourage from Paris and a crew of eight for talks with John Major. Presumably because of the weather he had to travel to London by train while his staff holed up in the Mottram Hall Hotel in Cheshire in great comfort and at great expense.

He was in town to discuss another British Aerospace arms deal, and his route into Britain followed the curious diversion taken by fellow Saudi, Sheik Kamal Adham, a month earlier. Adham, who fronted for BCCI in the United States and is involved in the scandal in a big way, also flew into Manchester in great secrecy in his private BAC 1-11 before being quietly whisked off to British Aerospace at Wharton and then on to London.

No doubt by coincidence, that visit timed beautifully with the release of Terry Waite. And it was also, no doubt, a complete coincidence that four Saudi C-130 aircraft were busily loading up arms in Manchester airport all through the weekend prior to Waite's release.

Adham, as a former chief of Saudi intelligence, is naturally very close to Princes Sultan and Bandar.

MUSIC NEWS

THE LATE Sir John Pritchard DBE said of the London Philharmonic: "It would never lose the smell of the betting shop." Well, it has now.

Indeed, the glandular odour which seeps on to the night air from its Doughty Street office is altogether more pungent. John Willen, the managing director, not content with lumbering the once self-governing orchestra with the beardless Austrian boy conductor Franz Welser-Most (known to his players as Frankly Worse-Than-Most) now wants to sack sundry long-serving players.

The last time this happened to the LPO was when Beecham returned at the end of the war from bombless exile in the United States — and the players sent him packing. Any bets on what the craven players do this time? They'll ring their hands and swallow hard, following the destiny of inevitability.

'Lunchtime O'Boulez'

Sally Deedes

***WATCH OUT** for one particular bit of junk mail this Christmas. In the last two weeks thousands of people have received a very convincing "shipping authorisation form" from CDP, Entrepot Centre, Schipol, Oost, The Netherlands.*

It tells them that a large crate is waiting to be delivered at an insured value of more than £75. It is both "household" and "personal" and signed by one "James Blakely." "To claim your merchandise return this notification with £14 to speed motor delivery to your address below."

Smelling a rat we rang British Telecom International in order to phone Mr Blakely (no telephone number is included on the form). We were told to hold on; and then a very helpful telephonist said: "We've had hundreds of inquiries for that number in the last few days. I'm afraid that it is a bogus firm and does not exist."

It looks as though Mr Blakely and CDP Entrepot were thinking of making a quick killing before Christmas. You have been warned!

HACK WATCH No 12: Joe Haines

DURING the past fortnight, many hacks who never wrote a critical word about Robert Maxwell during his lifetime have suddenly claimed that they knew he was a fraudster all along.

Joe Haines is a different case: rather than being wise after the event, he was wise *before* it. When Maxwell bought the *Mirror* in 1984, he rightly warned fellow-hacks that the Cap'n was "a crook and a liar, and I can prove it."

But he spoiled it all by immediately performing an amazing *volte face* and becoming Maxwell's most obedient lapdog (and hagiographer). Poor old Joe! If he had had the courage of his convictions he would today be hailed as a hero. Instead the feeble fellow is almost invisible beneath the huge quantity of egg on his face. Here's how it got there:

6 November: The day after Maxwell's final plunge, Haines composes the *Mirror*'s adulatory obituary. "His like will not be seen again," he concludes.

7 November: Tells the oft-told story of how, after the trees at Chateau Haines were blown down by the 1987 hurricane, Maxwell sent a gardener to clear up the mess. "It was the kind of generosity Maxwell often showed," he comments. "It is also why many of us in the *Mirror* building despise those who were seeking, within hours of his death, to smear him further... They will get their comeuppance, one day."

Elsewhere in the column, Haines writes of Maxwell's contempt for the City establishment: " 'If a gentleman from the City offers you his word or his bond,' Maxwell was fond of saying, 'always take his bond'... He was a professional and he didn't like amateurs."

11 November: "From the moment Harold Wilson resigned, rumours, inventions and baseless gossip began, and those whom he hardly knew rushed to claim intimate insights into his life and secrets, with heavy hints of scandal behind both... As it was with Harold Wilson, so it is and will be with Bob Maxwell." But the idea that Maxwell had any sinister secrets was "tosh and falsehood".

18 November: Attacks the "dishonourable" Rupert Allason MP, who has been making dark allegations about Robert Maxwell, for spouting "rubbish" and causing "distress" to everyone at the *Mirror*. Demands that Allason apologise.

21 November: Attacks the "naive" Rupert Allason MP, for the same reasons as before.

25 November: Haines is furious at a *Guardian* article which mocked the "red-faced outrage from assorted *Mirror* columnists against those who dare to speak in tones of less than whispered respect" of the late Cap'n Bob. "That," he rages, "was a typically limp-wristed *Guardian* defence of the indefensible. It has become a mean-spirited paper, a priggish *Private Eye*, and whenever it behaves disgustingly I will say so."

5 December: Nemesis arrives: the *Daily Mirror* has finally noticed that its deceased owner was a thumping crook. The great man's hagiographer isn't feeling too well. "It's been an awful week, the worst I can remember, and I need someone to talk to," he whimpers. No sign of contrition, however. Instead he boasts about what a great newspaper the *Mirror* is. This message, he risibly concludes, "was something I needed to get off my chest. Now I think I'll go home and have a good bath."

8 December: Joe emerges from the tub to tell the *Observer* of the horrors he has endured at the office in the past week. "We had to pour our own coffee because we couldn't discuss such sensitive matters in front of the girls," he wails before sinking beneath the Badedas again.

9 December: Now fully armoured with the great smell of Brut, Joe returns to his column in combative mood, attacking the "lies of the *Sun* and the gleeful malice of the *Guardian*". He reveals the shocking news that "a *Sun* photographer trespassed last week to take a photo of my house and garden". He also rails at "the wiseguys who were once colleagues" who have been writing rude articles about Cap'n Bob in other newspapers.

12 December: Still blissfully unaware of the beam in his own eye, Joe returns to the fray. "The *Daily Dustbin*, formerly the *Sun*, prints a lie or two a day about me at the moment. Its reporters, rather than ask what I'm paid or what my house costs — I wouldn't tell them anyway — simply make up figures." If he won't tell them anyway, why complain when they try to guess? Besides, the *Sun*'s figure for his salary — £75,000 a year — is if anything on the low side. Whether Joe will ever see a penny of his *pension* is quite another matter, of course...

16 December: Attacks Tory MP Andrew McKay for turning Commons "privilege into a scoundrels' charter." McKay has "twice wrongly described me as an executive director of Mirror Group Newspapers, accused me of being involved in a criminal fraud and asked for a debate... By smearing a Labour-supporting columnist, he thought he would help the Tory cause." Haines lambasts McKay for cowardice, saying that "if he were not a coward, he would state his lies to me face to face and risk getting the treatment which the cabbie administered to the judge, though, given his lack of testicular fortitude, I doubt if I could inflict injury." He omits to mention that he is a non-executive director of MGN and as such has a degree of responsibility in law for what happens within the company.

"He works to fulfil his ambition of becoming the head of one of the top ten media empires in the world which, in its train, will give them control of billions, yet the possession of money means little to him. Ask him why he does it and he will reply that he wants to be of service" — *Maxwell* by Joe Haines (1988).

ROTTEN BOROUGHS

BURY

CITIZENS of Bury, Britain's most insignificant borough, are consulting Messrs Sue, Grabbit and Runne as to whether there are grounds for sueing their incompetent, Labour-run council for negligence over its mind-boggling £6.5 million lost investment in BCCI.

The money represents so great a proportion of the town's finances that the litigants are worried that if the council had to pay m'learned friends it would go bankrupt.

When the BCCI bubble burst last summer, Bury trotted out the standard line about nobody having warned them that the bank was on the verge of crashing, that it was all the Bank of England's fault for placing BCCI on an "approved" list of finance houses and that the government was duty-bound to bail out the authority.

However, a few months later, on Radio 4's *Today* programme, Bury finance director Brian Smallridge admitted that he had known for some time that BCCI had been involved in drug-laundering, but assumed the scandal was confined to Florida!

Furious locals who want Smallbrain's head on a platter have hired zany Manchester lawyer Milton Firman to fight their case. Although they realise that it would be self-defeating to take action which could cost Bury even more money, Firman wants the courts to make a formal declaration on where the blame lies for the lost public funds.

Meanwhile, 15 miles away in Stockport, a similar group of disgruntled charge-payers is poised to follow Bury's example. There, a wealthier council lost less money — just over £1 million. Locals are still waiting for the council's Liberal Democrat leader, Eric Kime, to brief them on the trip he was due to make in July when he vowed to "personally go and demand the money back from the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi."

MURKEYSIDE

WHEN Liverpool's rubbish collection was taken over by the French firm Onyx, it made national headlines *(Eye 771)*. **Not a dickie-bird was heard about the council's subsequent success in keeping control over sweeping the streets.**

The ruling clique desperately wanted to avoid another bruising confrontation with the unions over redundancies, so they decided to appoint management consultants Cooper & Lybrand Deloite to handle their in-house bid.

The consultants' report to chief executive Peter Bounds was damning. They found that Peter Connor, the street cleansing manager, had done nothing to prepare a tender, despite having had two years to complete the task.

They also had "difficulties in understanding (Connor's) priorities and motives" — especially when he let slip that he'd received a job offer from Onyx, paying more than the council.

They were also surprised that Connor and two of his top managers were going on holiday "during the three critical weeks prior to developing the final tender."

But Connor did give a bit of help to them before going on hols. "If any information I've given you looks too high," he told the gobsmacked consultants, "feel free to cut it by 30 to 50 per cent."

In the end the council kept the contract and suspended Connor, who took early retirement. Onyx wisely decided not to give him a job either.

"Bloody joyriders!"

MANCHESTER

A POSTER has gone up on noticeboards in the housing offices of Manchester City Council, probably the worst public landlord in Britain.

Headed "A Doctor Wrights" (sic), it is penned in the style of the *Eye's* eponymous column. One "question" reads: "How do I go about (getting to the top of the housing queue? Answer: It couldn't be simpler! All you have to do is attend a special presentation evening at the Peveril Of The Peak pub in Manchester city centre and undergo a simple medical test which involves repeating to me at 10-minute intervals the phrase 'My Round Tom'."

Whatever does it all mean? Above the Q&A list is a picture of Tom Wright, senior re-housing officer and former male stripper, who is not the most popular bureaucrat in Manchester at the moment.

A few weeks ago a message flashed up on the housing department's computer screens informing officers that applicant No. 6494652, shortly to arrive in Manchester, should be offered a council property. A London telephone number was given for the applicant.

The message said the offer should be made according to the council's six-week rule, which allows staff to by-pass the interminable housing waiting lists by offering a property which has been empty for more than six weeks to anyone who happens to call into the town hall. Such properties are meant to be offered first to the council's homeless families unit before going on general release, however.

Officers were perturbed because the applicant had no housing qualification points, was moving up to Manchester to take a job with a firm awash with desirable properties for incoming workers and, as an owner-occupier in London, stood to make a handsome profit by selling-up and moving north.

Despite these doubts, the applicants moved in and paid no rent for more than a month. When an officer complained, he was told that since Tom Wright was the manager to whom complaints should be referred, no action could be taken. Furthermore he, the complainant, would have to be suspended.

BIRMINGHAM

THE Olympian light in which Birmingham's leaders now see themselves is perhaps best reflected in their apparent ability to call down fire at will.

Ten years ago, when the International Convention Centre was only in its planning stages, the city's bosses realised that the listed Bingley Hall, a Victorian masterpiece and the city's first exhibition hall, was smack in the middle of the only available site.

Shortly afterwards it was destroyed by fire. The ICC rose from its ashes.

Soon afterwards, other plans were announced for Woodgate Valley, including the redevelopment of riding stables owned by a Mr Hugh McCreedy — who refused to move out.

Despite months of threats and intimidation, during which the stables were surrounded by park wardens and their dogs, McCreedy refused to budge.

One night the stables were mysteriously destroyed by fire.

A senior city councillor was overheard boasting about burning McCreedy out.

The latest conflagration was just across the road from the ICC, destroying a huge clothing warehouse in Broad Street. It was blocking the way for a giant leisure development in which the city's socialist leaders plan to build Birmingham's sin city — complete with casinos, night clubs and other dives. Now all that can go ahead.

Fire investigation teams have declared it arson. Perhaps it is better described as another act of the Gods.

THE pioneering and intimate approach to child care adopted by Birmingham's social workers has had more results — the sacking or suspension of three senior staff said to have become too friendly with youngsters in their care.

In one case the department set up a 16-year-old girl from the Uplands home in her own flat. She was visited by a senior social worker from the home, who allegedly devoted a number of nights to giving her personal therapy. He is now suspended pending an investigation.

The other two cases both happened in the same home, Cherry Garth, in Highgate. Neil Williams, an agency worker supplied by Reed Care, was ordered out of the home over an alleged relationship with another 16-year-old girl in care. Reed Care has now suspended Williams — and has itself been sacked by the department.

A second Cherry Garth worker, Brian Keeley, has been sacked for an alleged relationship with the same girl. He has lodged an appeal.

Meanwhile, details are emerging of the incarceration of a 14-year-old rent boy in the top security unit at St John's. Staff were told that the boy was on no account to be visited by anyone — especially senior social services managers.

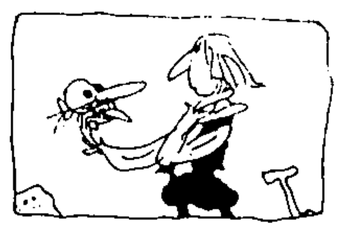
What could it all mean?

TORBAY

ALTHOUGH Cornish television viewers have not been over-enthusiastic in welcoming Westcountry TV as winners of the local ITV franchise since they found out that one of the backers was aluminium-dumping South West Water, over on the English Riviera the champagne corks have been popping.

Could the celebrations on Torbay Council be in any way related to the fact that Westcountry TV is not only a tributary of South West Water, but is also sponsored by Harmsworth Press, owners of the *Western Morning News*, the *Torbay Herald Express* and the free *Torbay Weekender*?

By an amazing coincidence, the deputy editor of the *Torbay Weekender*, Nick Pannell, is also the deputy leader of Torbay Council.



LUVVIES

I like to get to the studio early so I can walk around the set, so it's not strange to me, physically. I have this habit of touching everything — the tables, the chairs. It's as if there is a mystic power that says, "Yes, if you touch us, the inanimate objects, we'll give you energy, we'll be your friends." I want to believe the chair won't fall over because it likes you.

ROD STEIGER
Sunday Times

Submitted by APR.

An occasional column featuring gems from the acting profession. £10 for contributions.

Lockerbie Special

WHILE consternation reigns in the office of Lord Fraser of Carmyle, the Lord Advocate, following the visit to Libya of Dr Jim Swire, who lost a daughter in the Pan-Am flight which crashed at Lockerbie three years ago, the *Eye* can reveal that the Fatal Accident Inquiry into the disaster was deliberately fed false information by the authorities.

Lord Fraser, the Government's legal officer in Scotland, has been unsettled ever since he was bounced by the US State Department into making the unlikely announcement that two Libyan intelligence agents were responsible for the bombing. He has been bleating that the case against the Libyans is incontrovertible, and that the failure of the Libyan President Gadaffi to deliver them for trial in Scotland is an insult to international law and justice.

Dr Swire took this point up with Gadaffi, who apparently indicated that there was little or no sign of the two men's guilt, but said that if the Scottish authorities would present his government with the gist of the prosecution case, he would reconsider the possibility of their extradition.

Whether or not Gadaffi is to be believed, and he is not the world's most trustworthy political leader, the reply has put Fraser on the spot. Normal extradition proceedings are accompanied by at least some of the evidence that the wanted men are guilty. Up to now, no such evidence has been presented. The pressure on the Lord Advocate to release any evidence at all might prove either that he has none or that he has some against the Libyans though rather more against other terrorists patronised by that stout ally of the West and usher-in of the New World Order, the dictator of Syria, Assad.

Either alternative would do some damage to Lord Fraser's constant assertion that the inquiry into the bombing by the smallest police force in the country, Dumfries and Galloway, was a model of efficiency and self-discipline. So often does Lord Fraser repeat this (and so often is the refrain taken up by political leaders of all parties, not to mention President Bush) that some of the families of those who died have retorted angrily.

They point out that a senior representative of this brilliant police force, called to give evidence at the Dumfries inquiry, was somewhat economical with the truth.

The false police evidence, which has never been exposed before, concerns the role of a Bradford police surgeon, Dr David Fieldhouse. He was watching television on the night of 21 December 1988 when he heard news of the crash. He phoned the police at Lockerbie and offered his services to help with possible survivors. He then drove straight to Lockerbie, arriving soon after ten at night — three hours after the crash.

All through that dark and rainy night, working by torchlight, Dr Fieldhouse moved from site to site, uncovering the remains of bodies and certifying them dead. He went on working like this all the following day, without sleep and with nothing to eat but a biscuit. By darkness on the 22nd, he had found 58 bodies and certified them with a numbered tag which he put inside a plastic glove and attached to the corpses.

Dr Fieldhouse was rather surprised some 18 months later — in October 1990 — to read in a newspaper that he had been heavily criticised at the Fatal Accident Inquiry by a representative of the most brilliant little police force in the world.

The policeman was Sergeant D. Johnston of Dumfries and Galloway police. He told the inquiry about Dr Fieldhouse's efforts. This was the first time that any of the bereaved families or the public had heard of the doctor's involvement. The Lord Advocate — the same Lord Fraser who constantly sings the praises of the police — asked Sgt Johnston about a body found by Dr Fieldhouse.

Q: *Would this be another example of Dr or Mr Fieldhouse carrying out a search on his own?*

A: *It would, my Lord.*

Q: *And marking the body of the person who is dead without notifying the police?*

A: *That is correct.*

This picture of the doctor as a ghoul wandering round among dead bodies in the dark without police supervision or even permission continued to be painted by the sergeant when he was asked questions by Mr Gill, QC for the bereaved families.

Q: *Was Dr Fieldhouse an official member of the police inquiry team or was he some sort of freelance volunteer who had simply gone out in order to be helpful?*

A. *He was a volunteer who went out to render his assistance where at all possible if there had been any survivors.*

Sgt Johnston stressed that Dr Fieldhouse was "not acting as an official police surgeon". He went on: "Communication was made with Dr Fieldhouse and he was asked to provide complete details of all the victims and their locations that he had pronounced life extinct on."

Q: *Can you tell me when it was that Dr Fieldhouse provided that information to the Lockerbie inquiry office?*

A: *It would be some months later before we were able to ascertain the complete information we had to hand.*

Q: *It is clear, sergeant, that this is scarcely a very satisfactory state of affairs?*

A: *It was not very satisfactory, sir.*

The picture was complete. The grieving families were presented with the notion of a slightly deranged surgeon driving up in the middle of the night to certify bodies without liaising with the police or anyone else — and then taking several months to report what he had found.

The picture provided some sort of answer to a question that had been bothering some of the families. They had originally been told that their relations' death certificates had been signed on 24 December — three days after the crash. But a police constable who did the rounds of the families later told them the certificates were dated 22 December. Why, they wanted to know, were the dead bodies left around in open fields for two days after they were discovered? Why had the death certificate dates been changed?

At first, they were told the discrepancy was due to a typing error. But the Fatal Accident Inquiry gave them another answer. The bodies had been certified dead by a "freelance" surgeon who was acting without the cooperation or knowledge of the police in charge of the inquiry.

When Dr Fieldhouse read the report of Sgt Johnston's evidence, he was furious. He insisted on giving evidence to the inquiry himself.

In a long stint under oath, Dr Fieldhouse made it plain that the police version of his role on the fatal night was, in his own words, "absolutely untrue". He had reported to the police station as soon as he arrived at Lockerbie, had been allocated a police officer and instructed to go to different areas. *The police officer was with him during all his activities that night.* The following morning, the officer went off duty, to be replaced by three others, whom he could name — WPC 1033 Janet Teasdale; PC 742 Sullivan; and PC 376 Tim Hardy; all from Cumbria police. At least two of these officers were with him all day during which he inspected and certified some 47 bodies and covered an area of about 20 square miles.

When it was too dark to go on searching, the doctor said, he'd gone back to Lockerbie and the headquarters of the police operation. "I understood there was a debriefing meeting about to begin, but I was not allowed to attend," he said. He'd driven to Carlisle and spent the night with a relation. At crack of dawn the next day (the 23rd), he drove

"Short back, sides, ear, face, chest, arm, leg, bottom, foot..."

again to Lockerbie to keep an early morning appointment with Det Chief Inspector Alston of the Galloway police. Neither the DCI nor any other police officer kept the appointment.

To his amazement, Fieldhouse was told by a passing policeman that all the tags he'd put on the bodies were to be replaced by other tags. In some disgust, he drove home. That same night he wrote a report of his activities, which he faxed to the Dumfries and Galloway police (and which he read in full to the inquiry).

The entire picture presented by Sgt Johnston had been false. The doctor *had* liaised with police; during his searches, he had *never* been out of a policeman's company; and he *had* done everything in his power to report his findings, only to be ignored, and later publicly slandered.

Dr Fieldhouse's reputation was thus restored. For the families, there were more questions. Why, after all, were the dead bodies of their relations left in the open for two days after they were found and certified dead? Was it simply lack of time to prepare for their recovery — just general delay in the most appalling circumstances? And if so, how to explain the prodigious effort by the police to cover up the truth of the Fieldhouse story?

For a probable answer to all these questions turn to pages 67- 77 of *Lockerbie — The Real Story* by the Scottish radio reporter David Johnston. Johnston describes the near-hysterical search in the hours following the crash by agents of the Central Intelligence Agency who rushed to the scene from Edinburgh. They were after the luggage of top CIA agents who had boarded the flight at Frankfurt. They were specially interested in the suitcase of Major Charles McKee, a top CIA agent who had been involved in sensitive negotiations for the freeing of hostages in Beirut (another CIA man who died at Lockerbie, Matthew Gannon, was deputy CIA station chief in Beirut). They were also interested in a suitcase full of heroin.

David Johnston suggested on radio at the time that the investigation on the ground at Lockerbie had been held up for at least two days while the CIA and the military hunted for these two cases. McKee's case, he said, had to be officially "returned" to the fields round Lockerbie and "found" after its sensitive contents had been removed by the CIA. When he said these things on radio, Johnston was approached by very senior police officers and told that if he wanted to disclose the source of his information, anyone in the country, even the Prime Minister, would be prepared to receive the information in confidence. He refused, and nothing further happened.

If orders from on high insisted that the whole search operation should be subordinated to the demands of the CIA, the insulting treatment of David Fieldhouse by the brilliant little Galloway police force makes some sense. If there was first a search for intelligence documents, the bodies would have to wait, and be re-classified in the "right order".

Fieldhouse's dedication and enthusiasm became an embarrassment to the real masters of the Lockerbie inquiry, for whom their precious secrets about deals with terrorists (including perhaps one deal which went horribly wrong) were far more important than the identity of the bombers.

OXFORD 244607
GEORGE STREET

CANNON CINEMAS

OXFORD 243067
MAGDALEN STREET

Robin Williams
Jeff Bridges
THE FISHER KING (18)
1.40 4.40 7.45

Kenneth Branagh
Emma Thompson
DEAD AGAIN (15)
2.00 (Not Sat, Sun) 5.25 8.10

Bill Murray
Richard Dreyfus
WHAT ABOUT BOB (PG)
2.30 5.30 8.15

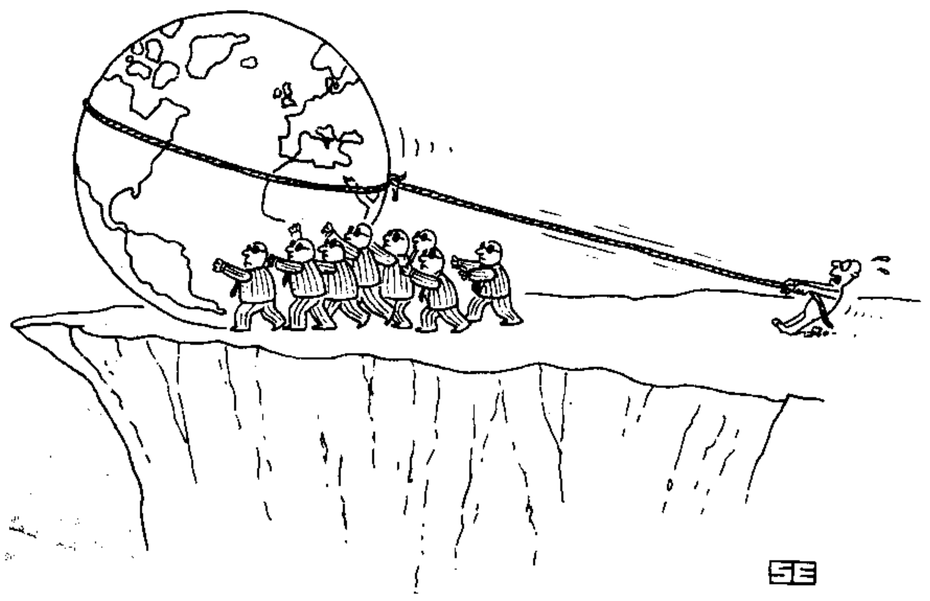
Greta Scacchi Tom Berenger
Bob Hoskins
In
SHATTERED (15)
Sep progs 2.30 5.30 8.20

NO SMOKING - ALL PROGS SUBJECT TO LATE CHANGE

Oxford Mail, 25/11/91

DOWN ON THE FARM

with 'Old Muckspreader'



IT IS difficult not to be charmed by the kindly but confused Country Landowners Association. They are opposed to subsidies, but do not want them phased out "prematurely". They are opposed to set-aside grants, but want them to be increased. They favour private ownership of woodlands, but support the depredations of the Forestry Commission. They support free trade, but want farmers to be protected. Their IQs may not be high, but they are lovable people.

They publish an engaging magazine, *Country Landowner*, famous for the selection of attractive wealthy widows and divorcees advertising in its select personal columns. *Big Farmer's Weekly* has nothing to beat the CLA's girls, but I suppose size isn't everything. *Big Farmer's* lonely hearts columns read more like livestock ads... "Nigel Tantrum wishes to locate big strong non-smoker/drinker, any location, good mechanic." Mrs Anne Greedy offers to "expand your social life". The membership's main Christmas purchases are guns. They seem to impress girls.

EARTH MATTERS, the magazine of Friends of the Earth, offers a DIY destruction manual. If you want to destroy the globe you should be a faithful customer of Texas Homecare, Do It All, Sainsbury's Homebase, Wickes, B&Q and Great Mills. Friends of the Earth report these sinister firms as having "considerable influence in the timber trade" and being part of a capitalist conspiracy to destroy the rainforests.

So, if you want to help exterminate rare species of trees and fauna, Simon Counsell of Friends of the Earth Tropical Timber Campaign Unit wants to hear from you.

Earth Matters' contact ads are dreadful. Why does greenery attract the grey? They sound like ugly frogs who would turn into ugly toads if you kissed them. FoE activists are exchanging wormeries for Christmas. "Tiger Worms" offer "an odour-free and pleasant friendship that will last indefinitely".

ESSEX MAN is even worse than the spotty Greens. The farmers of this flat, grim county are angry that East End bruisers have found a more profitable use for their acres than subsidy collection for "farming" — hare-coursing tournaments. The horrid toughs are churning up winter cereals, panicking sheep and cutting wire.

Julia Bollock, a legal adviser to the farmers, says: "It is happening anywhere there is flat land. It is very well-organised and highly profitable. It is quite unlike farming." Ms Bollock urges Essex magistrates to fine hare coursers heftily and to impound their dogs and vehicles.

Hare Coursing Monthly has only a few forlorn contact ads. Hare coursers are mostly buying their loved ones thermal-lined green wellies for Christmas.

Perhaps hunting — beagling, foxhounding, badger taunting, bird shooting and fish hooking — is the natural fate of the countryside after farming ends.

THE National Farmers Union is howling with anguish after discovering that farming incomes are 15 per cent lower than they were last year. The NFU reports that 7,000 farmers have given up this year and 15,000 farm workers have found something better to do.

Mr David Naish slams J.S. Gummer, our bold agriculture minister, as "the biggest betrayal I have ever seen... most farmers are only too aware of the real situation on the ground." The more the NFU weasels, the more its deceit is uncovered. The NFU has no lonely hearts column. NFU members are mostly selecting new cars for their loved ones' Christmas. The days of Range-Rovers are long gone.

Letters

PrivateEye

It's that man again...

Sir,

Well done, Lord Gnome. It's refreshing to see that you've not joined in the hypocrisy surrounding Cap'n Bob's demise and have carried on investigating his affairs. You've had many hilarious bad-taste covers in the past, but with the issue of 22/11/91 you've topped yourself. Oops!

Happy Xmas,
MIKE PRITCHARD,

Spain.

Sir,

I wonder if other (Eye) readers have noticed the remarkable lack of any resemblance between the editorially independent DAILY MIRROR *this morning (Maxwell: The Lie) and the editorially independent* DAILY MIRROR *before today (e.g. The Man Who Saved The Mirror, etc).*

Could they be by any chance related? I think we should be told why not.

Yours faithfully,
JON KNOX,

Leeds.

Sir,

Listening to Anne Robinson on Radio 2 today at work (we have no choice, they pipe it in). After she'd just played "A fine Lennon and McCartney song" (written by George Harrison) it occurred to me that someone who earns their living by writing pontificating, judgemental items, and yet can't see through a grotesque buffoon like Maxwell, should perhaps keep their mouth shut and seem employment in some other field.

Keep up the good work. He never fooled you, did he?

Yours faithfully,
IAN DUCKWORTH,

Rochdale, Lancs.

Sir

As a manufacturer (is there anyone else out there?) of specialised equipment exporting 75% of turnover I have recently finally obtained an increase of £50,000 in borrowing facilities from my bank. To do this I have had to invest my own £50,000 in additional capital.

My companies total debt, including trade creditors, is still less than 50% of assets. Our bankers require monthly accounts, lists of debtors and creditors and visit us regularly.

Why are the same rigid rules not applied to the Maxwells, Laceys etc of this world. Could it possibly be because I do not employ the services of leading accountants, lawyers and merchant bankers?

I think I should be told.

Yours faithfully,
ALAN ROUTS,

Managing Director, Sheen Instruments Ltd, Teddington, Middx.

YOUR FAVOURITE TORIES ON TAPE

TWO MORE Tories have been shown to be involved in efforts to investigate the socialist millionaire Owen Oyston, the *Eye* can reveal.

In the last *Eye* we quoted extensively from taped conversations involving Sir Peter Blaker and Sports Minister Robert Atkins, who for several years had been active in a group of Lancashire Tories financing an investigation into Oyston.

Despite their public utterances about "public interest", the tapes reveal political and commercial intrigue as well as plain malice.

As *Eye* readers will recall, the person chosen to investigate Oyston was Michael Murrin, a Preston-based former life insurance salesman and fish shop owner.

Into this rather sordid tale comes Lord Waddington, the former Home Secretary and now Leader of the House of Lords. When he was the Government's chief whip, Murrin met him at least three times in his surgeries in and near Preston. Murrin says Waddington told him that he, Murrin, was doing a public service in investigating Oyston and encouraged him to continue.

But Murrin was not always happy with the encouragement he felt he got from Waddington. When he received a particularly bland letter from Waddington, he turned to his mentor, Sir Peter Blaker, for advice. Blaker counselled Murrin about what Waddington's public position must be, but said: "Don't assume he's doing nothing." Murrin replied: "Does that mean press on?" "Yes, by all means," replied Blaker, referring to Oyston as "our target".

Another Tory with an unwholesome interest in Oyston is the MP for Amber Valley, Philip Oppenheim, who does not care much for his local county council, Derbyshire, which is Labour run. To be fair, its members do not much care for him either.

Oppenheim had a research assistant called Tim Mitchell, whom met in London at the Norman Shaw building where Oppenheim has an office. In a tape recording arranging that meeting, Mitchell told Murrin that he would like to use Murrin's investigation to pursue Derbyshire County Council over its commercial relationships with Oyston-related companies.

Mitchell, who now works in Conservative Central Office for Sir Tom Arnold, told the *Eye* the only reason he and Oppenheim used the Murrin investigation material was because of their concern over loans made to Oyston companies by the council's pension fund, which he considered to be unsatisfactory although, he conceded, not illegal.

Oppenheim also asked Murrin for help. In a letter dated 13 March 1989, the Tory MP said Derbyshire County Council was suing him for libel over a comment he had made about the pension fund and Oyston. He was particularly interested in the Inland Revenue and an investigation into Oyston by them. He was duly supplied with documents by Murrin, which had been stolen from Oyston's office by an accountant, now dead. Murrin told the *Eye* that both Oppenheim and Mitchell were aware the documents were "lifted" from Oyston's office.

'Backbiter'

"Do exactly as we say, Mr Briggs, or the Snowman gets it"

And again

Sir,

A few thoughts and ironies concerning the Maxwell saga from a former director of a few of his companies.

1. When he decided to become a leading law publisher, the first venture launched was "The Criminal Law Library". The first volume published? "Fraud". And we used to think that he never read our books!

2. Another early venture was a series of pamphlets with a leading accountancy firm, including one on directors' duties. The name of the firm was Robson Rhodes. Who obtained the injunction freezing Kevin Maxwell's assets? You guessed it. Robson Rhodes. Moving, isn't it?

3. In February 1988, I penned a memo to Kevin Maxwell drawing his attention to a transaction between the then privately-owned Pergamon Press and a subsidiary of publicly-quoted Hollis plc. It concerned the unauthorised transfer by a rather labyrinthine process of £37,000 worth of stock. Its penultimate paragraph read:

"There is a very serious point which you may wish to address: how can it possibly by that valuable product can seemingly slosh around various group companies with no apparent authority?"

As on many occasions, the courtesy of even an acknowledgement was not forthcoming.

4. Finally, I'm surprised no-one has commented on the singularly appropriate name of the first recipient of a sale following The Fat Controller's death. It seems to sum up the attitude of a desperate vendor — Fukutake.

Yours faithfully,
IAN PHILLIPS,

London NW11.

Sir,

Robert Maxwell - Deceased

In your PRIVATE BYE issue, your correspondent G C Shaw, a maritime expert with experience of deaths at sea, writes that he has never encountered a case where an individual in his death throes attempted to climb over the side of a ship. I would refer Mr Shaw to the unfortunate case last year, where a party of football supporters on a North Sea ferry had consumed the hallucinogen LSD, and one of them was unfortunate enough to throw himself overboard after an unpleasant experience involving a fire extinguisher.

I believe this sad case could explain much of the mystery behind Mr Maxwell's death. Has anyone considered the possibility that Robert Maxwell was a secret acid head ? This hypothesis fits the available facts very well; his insomnia on the night in question, parading naked on deck in the cold of an early morning, very obvious hallucinations regarding his wealth, general megalomania and faith in the Labour Party. The most telling evidence of all is Maxwell's heart attack, undoubtedly brought on by the strychnine with which LSD is commonly laced.

I think an immediate search of the Lady Ghislaine should be made for Grateful Dead albums, tie-dyed bow ties & Blue Star tattoos.

Yours (with starry pineapples),
ANDY DINGLEY,

c/o Computer Information Exchange, Surbiton, Surrey.

Cramer

Sir,

What a ridiculous story in last week's EYE *about Kate Adie. You suggest she has been absent from the screen during the unrest in Yugoslavia — in the very week she was filing every day from that country. You further suggest I, for some bizarre reason, have ordered her out of the newsroom — this is also untrue.*

Yours faithfully,
CHRIS CRAMER,

Head of Newsgathering, BBC News and Current Affairs, London W12.

Unfair and square

Sir,

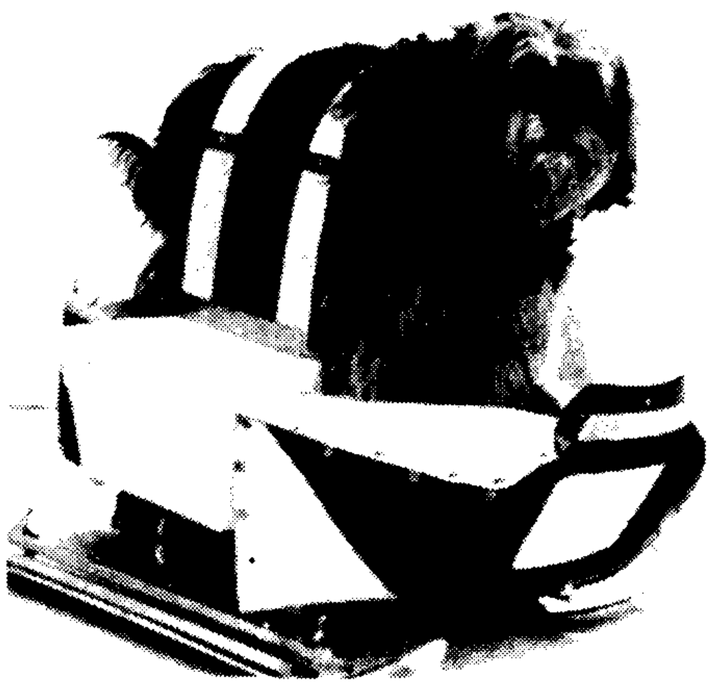
Why is Square Eyes so proud of not having read CLARISSA*? He has, let me assure him, deprived himself of one of the greatest of literary treats. He thinks only about five people have read it. He admits that adaptors David Nokes and Janet Barron are two of them. My wife and I (five times between us) are two more. Perhaps he could give us the name of the other one; we might design a tie or an "I've read* CLARISSA*" car-sticker or lapel-pin.*

Seriously though, what kind of reviewing is it to BOAST about not being properly qualified for the piece you're writing, and go on to attack the SUPPOSED attitudes of those who are? In which connection, and as a professional critic myself, I would add that the TV CLARISSA *is an excellent piece of television drama, and a pretty successful attempt to capture the complexity and deviousness of the novel in another medium — an opinion which I am qualified to express, and Square Eyes isn't.*

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL GROSVENOR-MYER,

Haddenham, Cambs.

Alpenhundski



Sir,

The thrusting and innovative nature of Gnome's Xmas Mail mart has, I'm afraid, failed your readers this year.

Before anyone orders skis for dogs from you, they should be aware that a more advanced version of the Alphenhundski was invented in Switzerland over three years ago. Pierluigi Pagenetti, the inventor, sensibly perceived that dogs have a lot of difficulty skiing. His skis therefore have a radio-controlled steering mechanism and can be operated by His Master from a safe distance.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID GOLDSMITH,

Equipment Editor, Ski Survey Magazine, London.

National Wealth

Sir,

Your Health News column in Eye 781 reports the government's view that volunteer drivers who take patients and visitors to hospitals do so for profit, and should therefore be taxed on their expenses. They are, of course, absolutely correct. I speak from personal knowledge, as my parents are among those performing this useful service.

It is also, naturally, because of the fabulous salaries offered to volunteers, and not from any desire to be of service to the community, that my parents also help their local Oxfam Shop, hospital library and Nature Conservancy project, among others.

Isn't it enough that ten years of Tory government have ruined Britain's public services, without penalising those who try to help the victims of this neglect?

ROD PARKES,

Hong Kong.

Lookalike

In Issue 552, 11 February 1983, Private Eye printed the following Lookalike.

Kray Twins

Kray

Maxwell

Sir,

Have any of your readers noticed the remarkable likeness between Robert Maxwell, chairman of BPCC and Ronnie Kray, the famous East End gangster?

I wonder if they have anything else in common?

Yours sincerely,
ENA T. COURTAULD,
Whirlpool Farm, Cross-in-Hand, Sussex.

Robert Maxwell sued, and in issue 554 Private Eye apologised to Mr Maxwell, especially for "the final paragraph of the letter".

We would now like to take this opportunity to apologise to Mr Ronnie Kray for this appalling slur upon his reputation. We regret the fictitious and offensive innuendo concerning the alleged "remarkable likeness" to Robert Maxwell and unreservedly acknowledge that no such likeness exists. We are sorry for any distress that this may have inadvertently have caused Mr Kray or his brother.

Jeremy Shaw

Sir,

Once again your local government correspondent feels the need to attack Tower Hamlet Liberals, through his defamatory piece on Councillor Jeremy Shaw, accusing Mr Shaw of pandering to a racist Aryan vote.

Your correspondent claims that most Bangladeshis live in Weavers ward — for "Weavers" read "Spitalfields". Easy error.

Your correspondent says the BNP achieved 25% of the vote in St Peters the next door ward to Weavers. "25%" read "10% in a by-election". What's 15% between friends?

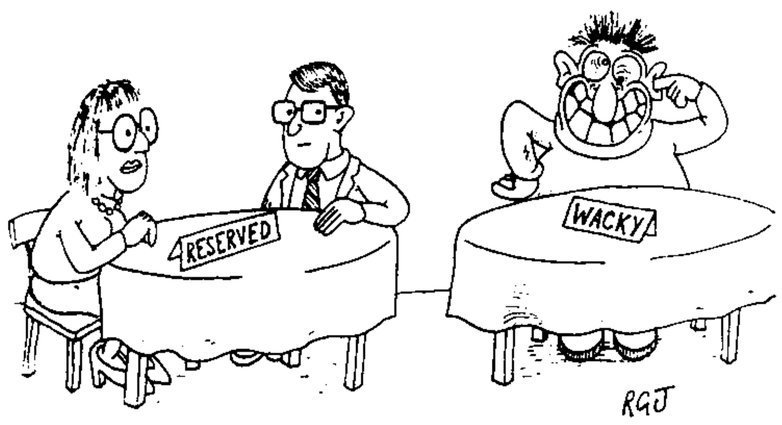
Above all your correspondent claims that Jeremy Shaw wants the Aryan vote. Funny then that Jeremy Shaw worked so hard to get Cllr Abdul Rohim (Bangladeshi) and Cllr Bette Wright (Jewish) elected as Liberal Democrat Councillors for St Peters Ward. Even odder that Jeremy Shaw is himself Jewish and his wife Pat is black — or they were last time I saw them.

Perhaps the schmuck who wrote this load of shit could apologise to Jeremy Shaw and promise to check his facts next time.

Please do not cancel my subscription.

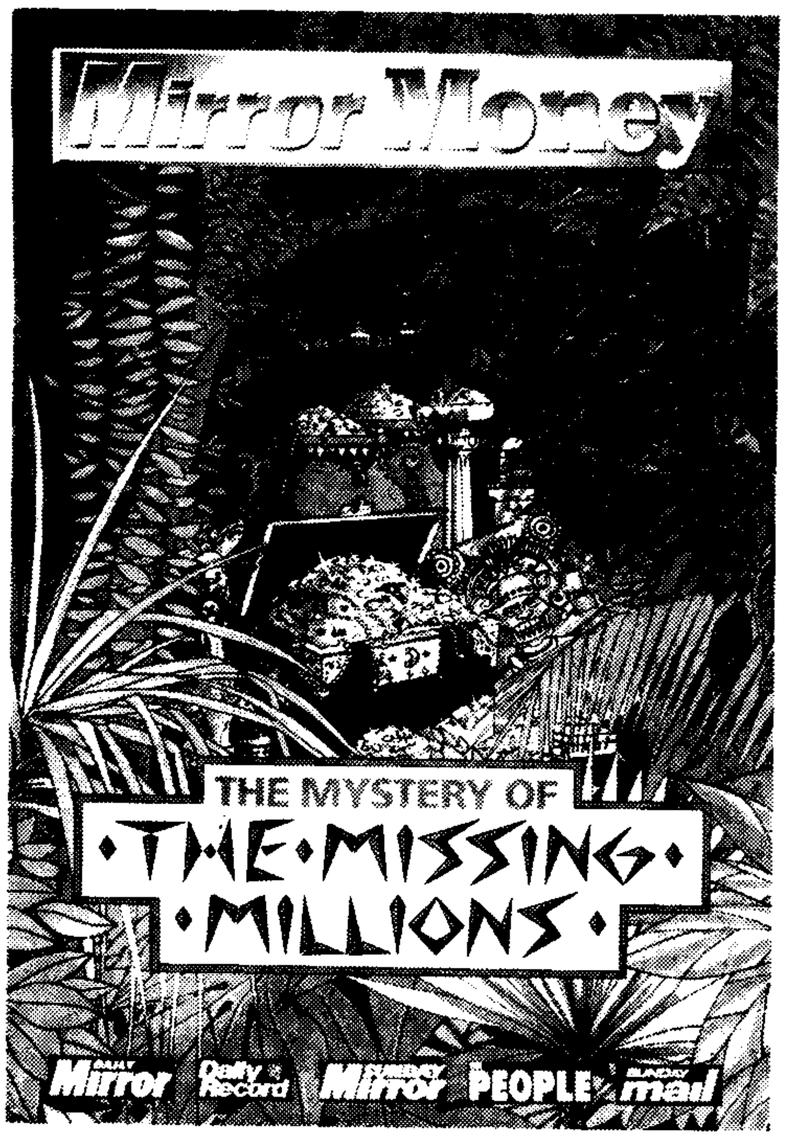
Yours faithfully,
TOM WINNIFRITH,

London E2.



I-SPY

MGN publicity material, 18.11.91



Submitted by Julian Calderara. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Beck and call

Sir,

Thank you for giving a wider public the chance to savour the pellucid beauty of the sensitive and caring piece on Frank Beck which I wrote in 1983 before he had been transformed by our cruel and unfeeling tabloids into a "sex monster".

It would, however, be selfish and ungenerous of me to neglect to pay tribute to the numerous police officers, councillors, senior social services managers, Government inspectors, and indeed the great Eye itself, who until yesterday shared by reluctance to besmirch the name of this great innovator in the treatment of what Mrs Bottomley so felicitously called "these troubled and troublesome young people."

When I called on Mr Beck, at that time the jewel in Leicestershire social services' crown, renowned for his skill in dealing with the T&TYPs, in response (I recall) to an invitation from the county to come and report on his outstanding work. I can only claim to have been one among many of his adulators.

It is true that my questions could have been more rigorous ("And how do you spend your evenings?") but a humble hack spending less than two yours at The Beeches before returning to the London train could never have done full justice to the place.

Yours faithfully,
NICHOLAS MURRAY,

Presteigne, Powys.

Cardinal error

Sir,

Lord Runcie may have been the last great Archbishop of Canterbury in the tradition of Temple and Thomas A Becket but not Cardinal Wolsey.

Wolsey was Archbishop of York and, pluralist though he was, even he did not manage to hold both Archiepiscopal Sees.

Yours faithfully,
S.W. SHAW,

Keith, Banffshire.

Monkey business

Sir,

Please point out to "Backbiter" that "Cheetah" was the chimpanzee in the Tarzan films. The one in Daktari was called "Judy" and was portrayed as being so intelligent I'm sure she would be mortally offended at being compared in any way to John Gummer.

Yours faithfully,
KATHLEEN GLANCY,

Edinburgh.

The End

Sir,

I've heard a rumour that Robert Maxwell might be a crook. Do you think there is any truth in it?

Yours faithfully,
BEANO,

Class War (no address).

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"Sammy McIlroy — a great player, both on and off the field."
PETER JONES, BBC World Service,
(David Gibson)

"It's the original David against Goliath here."
COMMENTATOR, ITV,
(Douglas Norton)

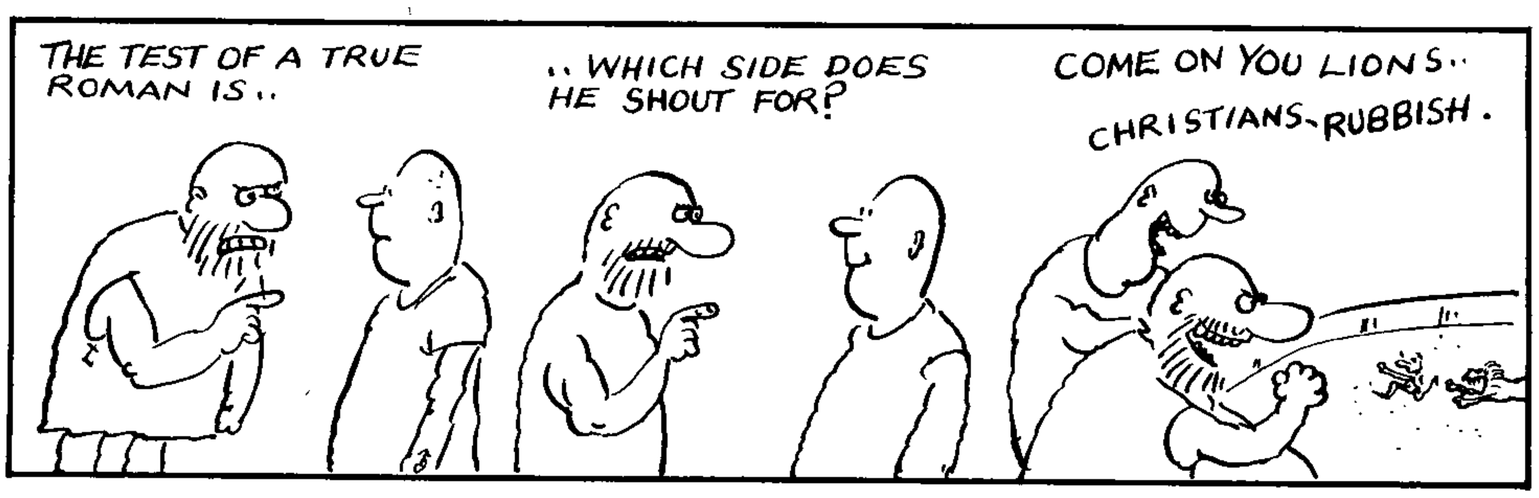
"This track is brilliant. I played it for the first time last week and we are doing the same this week."
PHILIP SCHOFIELD, Radio 1,
(Andrew Morton)

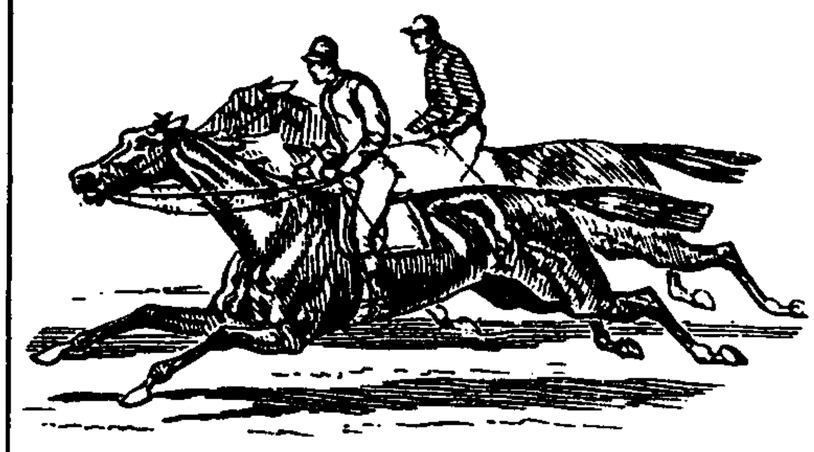
"He's captain of Rangers and that's one of the reasons he's captain."
WALTER SMITH, Radio Clyde,
(Andrew Baillie)

Emma Freud: *"You knew Ludovic Kennedy when he was three. What was he like as a three-year-old?"*
Viscount Whitelaw: *"Well, he was a three-year-old."*
BBC2
(Peter Bradshaw)

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN





Sporting Life

IT NOW looks as if Pasty Face Stroud, Bill Smith, The Honourable Acton and other members of Sheikh Mohammed's Dalham Hall entourage are going to get a little seasonal bonus after all.

Back in the autumn there was much talk of how the Sheikh and his brothers were feeling the economic pinch. Would the "Lucky Club" be compelled to spend Christmas on the cold streets of Knightsbridge, down to their last pot of caviar and able only to gaze up longingly at the brightly-lit windows of the Maktoums' Carlton Towers penthouse apartments?

The first sign that things might not be quite so bad after all came with the revelation that the Sheikh had managed to find sufficient dosh to buy 50 per cent of Arazi. The amount he paid varies according to which camp you talk to, but it seems unlikely that he could have seen much change from $8 million.

The purchase enabled the Sheikh to get his hands on a ready-made champion at a stroke, cutting out all that boring business with yearlings and uncertain racecourse debuts. It was also sufficient to sooth his irritation at not having seen his colours carried with more distinction on the flat in Europe in 1991 and to head off all talk of a move into motor racing.

Arazi's Breeders Cup win has already doubled the value of the Sheikh's investment. While the horse may be returning to Francois Boutin's French stable for the winter, insiders in Kentucky remain convinced that it will only run on Bute and on co-owner Allen Paulson's favoured US territory in 1992.

In the meantime, the Sheikh is understandably keen to plug a few holes and improve a few revenues on the domestic front. It seems he is starting with the tenants of St George's Court, a mansion block in Kensington. In November one tenant won a legal action against Chestertons, the managing agents, after they tried to evict her for taking in a lodger to help pay the rent. The judge threw out the case when he heard that the property was owned by His Bigness, and expressed astonishment that one of the richest men in the world should allow agents to treat tenants in such a way. The rent officer had earlier approved rent increases of between 12.5 per cent and 14.5 per cent. Chestertons had demanded a 25 per cent rise.

When residents attended the Rent Assessment Panel on 11 November to hear the landlords' appeal against the rent officer's ruling, they were stunned to hear Chestertons, acting on behalf of the Sheikh's company Pegasi Ltd, demand that rents should be raised by 100 per cent. According to a spokesmen for Chestertons: "We are following guidelines laid down by the government in 1988. The people who are now tenants probably helped elect the Tory party. Now they have to live with the consequences."

The idea, clearly, is to inflate the rents until the established residents are forced to move out, then get in lots of high-rolling transient tenants. Kensington MP Dudley Fishburn has described it as "despicable behaviour. We're in the depths of recession with inflation down to four per cent and a surplus in the property market. It is untenable for people to demand rent increases of 100 per cent."

Fishburn probably doesn't realise that the Sheikh has the Lucky Club to feed and a lot of Concorde and first-class air tickets to buy to next year's Kentucky Derby.

'Major Bonkers'

TRUE STORIES

CHRISTOPHER LOGUE

Illuminated by BERT KITCHEN

INTERVIEWED after the event, Miss Juniper Weehope said: "I was passing Mrs Jones's house when she put her head around the front door and asked me to take a note to the Fire Station, which I did.

"Ten minutes later, as I was leaving Boots, the fire engine came roaring down the High Street, bells and siren going, and when I repassed Mrs Jones's she explained that the note had said her house was on fire, but she didn't want to cause too much fuss."

MR Russell B. Adler and his wife, Davina Christine, are suing Rabbi Loring J. Frank for arriving an hour and a half later than agreed to perform their wedding.

Mrs Adler said: "We had allowed $1500.00 for drink and the bill came to $2,500.00. Mr and Mrs Schcktum started a vicious rumour that the wedding was off. I had a long, boring wait in a small room, and Russell's backache re-emerged, making it impossible for him to stand upright during the ceremony."

DURING the trial, Judge Joseph Xavier Forcens was shown numerous photographs revealing that Minguel Gonzales, better known as "Michel the Striker", Real Madrid's superstar forward, putting his hand up Carlos Valderrama's shorts and giving his testicles a quick squeeze.

"I have seen your deft hand, I have seen your smirk, and I am sure, Minguel Gonzales, that you did this to spoil Carlos Valderrama's corner kick."

£6,000.

"*MANY residents of Penzance had been looking forward to the new £200,000 all-weather canopy that British Rail have installed over the platforms," said Mr Harold Sheepstone of the Cornish Consumers Protection Society.*

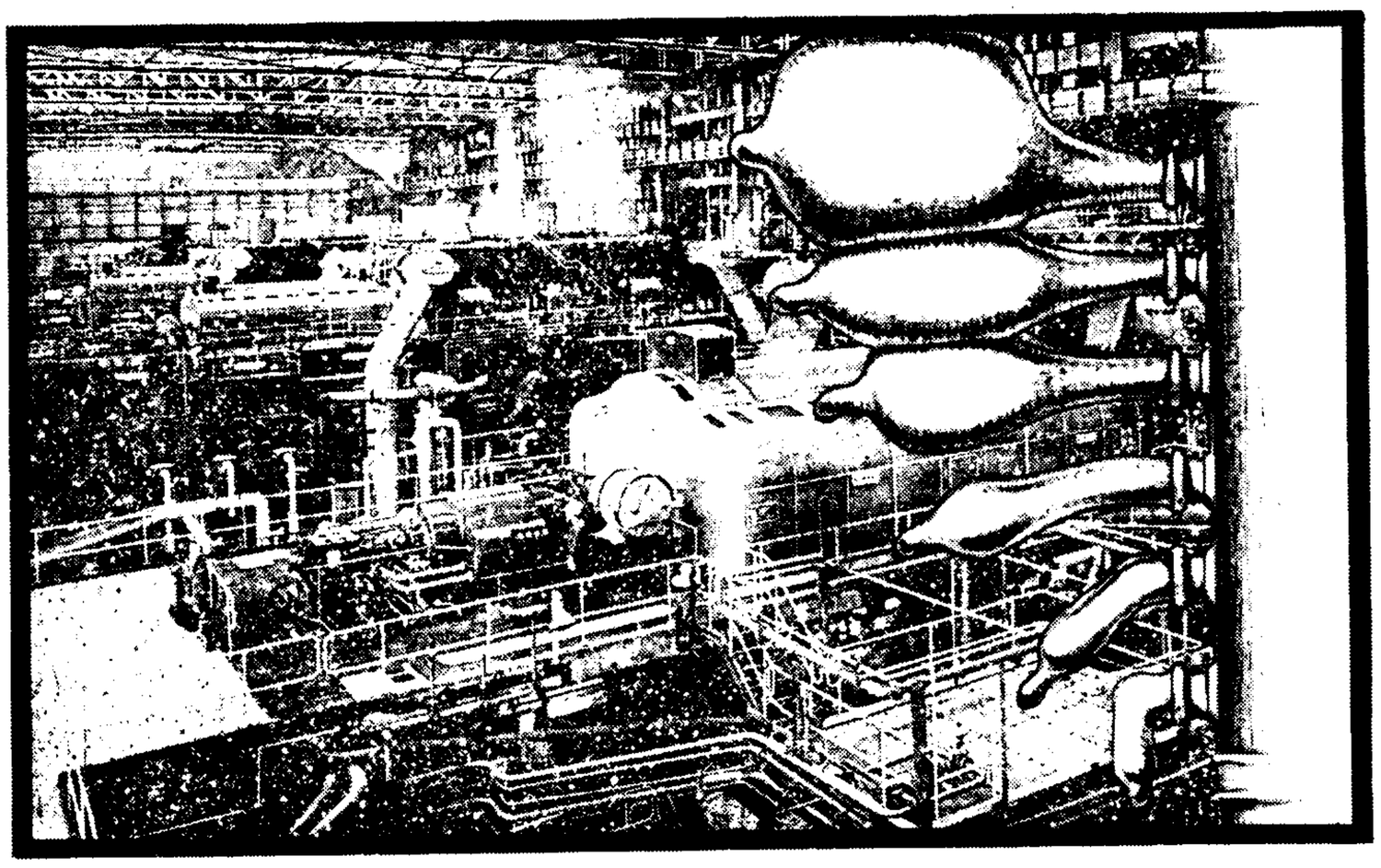
"But because they removed the old ventilation lantern on the grounds that it caused wind-resistance, the fumes from the diesel trains cannot escape the new canopy, and passengers have to board and leave the trains from a platform with no roof or side protection at all."

A spokesman for British Rail said: "Arriving trains stop as normal inside the station. The engine is then shut down. A second engine is then attached to the rear of the arriving train. This engine tows the train out of the canopy area to the new alighting/departing fume-free platform. Of course, this problem would not have occurred at all if Penzance had been a through-station rather than a terminus."

"IT CAME as a most terrible shock to the whole family," said Mr James Agip of Coursmead, Bradford. "My daughter, Tracy, decided to marry Mr Jim Brown after a whirlwind courtship of three days and a special licence wedding.

"But the bride and groom had hardly exchanged a kiss when ten armed police charged into the register office and slapped the cuffs on Jim's wrists as he was, in fact, Jim Smith, who was serving five years for armed robbery on the Isle of Man.

"The only person who was happy about it was my youngest son, Duane, who got the whole thing on video and has been showing it nightly at our local pub."



CHIEF ENGINEER Bishop Ondiek of the Hawange Generating Station, Uganda, has been suspended on half-pay while an official enquiry determines why, during a visit by the new Minister of Power, Mr Bagara Wango, six condoms attached to a transmission pipe suddenly ballooned out "to enormous size" as the Minister was walking by.

Mr Francis Murang'a, Mr Ondiek's assistant, said: "There is a shortage of spare parts, so we have been using the condoms as temporary pressure gauges."

INFORMATION: Herald Express (Devon) 20.8.91; International Herald Tribune 26.7.91; New Straits Times 23.8.91; The Cornishman 26.8.91; Bradford Courier 12.10.91; Mainichi Daily News 20.8.91.

MONITORS: Anon; Anon; A.J. Elliston; Mike Fenton; Mary Anne Ebert, Clifton Melvin.

Christmas TV Films

Christmas Day
4.00pm BBC2

Au Revoir les Viewers (b&w, 1hr 27mins). Classic 1923 French masterpiece by director Pierre d'Or. Shown for the first time on television, this sombre even-paced *filme verité* tells the story of a young boy's discovery of how boring French films were during the 1920s. With Caroline St Michele, and the young Jean Birt as the boy.

Eye Rating: Z-z-z-z

Christmas Day
9.00pm BBC1

Fatman (MGN, colour, 7hrs). Multi-million-pound extravaganza which was successfully adapted from the cartoon characters that ran in a daily newspaper — Fatman and Robbing.

By day Fatman was successful entrepreneur, philanthropist and publisher Robert Maxwell. By night he stole millions of pounds and put them in his own pocket. Starring Robert Morley as Fatman and Kevin Maxwell as "The Boy Wondering-if-he's-going-to-chokey".

Eye Rating: Don't miss him at all.

Boxing Day Evening
10.00pm ITV

Clint Eastwood double bill — *Every Which Way He's On* and *Fistful of Repeats*. Two vintage Clint Eastwood films from the '70s, shown for the very 38th time on television. No need to remind you of the plot — you must know it backwards by now, especially that bit where, you know, he shoots the rope from round whatsit's neck, Lee Van Cleef or the other one.

Eye Rating: Brilliant. Five stars.

New Year's Eve
9.00pm BBC2

Le Grand Ennui (b&w, 1hr). The season of French masterpieces continues with Jean Rapideau's highly acclaimed 1931 portrayal of a family over Christmas desperately looking for something to watch on television. In a tragic climax, the father (played by Gerard Ronson) storms out of the house and goes to the video shop.

Eye Rating: Z-z-z-z-z-z.

New Year's Day Evening
3.20pm ITV

They Danced To Bruges (colour, 150mins)
1953 Hollywood remake of the classic English World War Two film *They Flew To Bruges*, a long-time Christmas favourite with viewers.

The transformation to full-scale musical works perfectly, with Frank Sinatra excelling as Squadron-Leader P.K. "Pinky" Braithwaite, who leads the victorious all-dancing assault on the sleepy occupied town of Bruges. The cast is a galaxy of Hollywood giants, including Gene Kelly as Group Captain "Spiffy" Wilkington, Dean Martin as Gunner Jock "Jock" MacSporran, Doris Day as Wren officer Betty Carruthers, and Marilyn Monroe, who pops up as the Lady Mayoress of Bruges. The spectacular tap sequence in the divisional headquarters of the Waffen SS to Normy Schwarzkopf's hit *We're Dancing to Bruges* is quite unforgettable.
(That's enough terrible films. Ed.)

KENNETH BAKER NOT ASKED TO RESIGN SHOCK

by Our Home Affairs Staff
John Tosa

IN AN amazing day in the House of Commons yesterday, Home Secretary Kenneth Baker was not at any stage asked to hand in his resignation.

MPs were astonished as minute after minute went by without any demand that Mr Baker should stand down immediately.

Baker's Dozen Cock-ups

There was no mention throughout the whole session of his incompetence, arrogance, stupidity, smugness or type of hair gel. No member on either side of the house mentioned miscarriages of Justice, IRA criminals escaping from Brixton Jail, the registration of dangerous dogs, contempt of court, the Wandsworth Mail Bag Secrets fiasco, or any of the other incidents which have caused so much embarrassment to Mr Baker in recent months.

Said one Parliamentary observer: "I could not believe it. I was just waiting for someone to call for his resignation. But it didn't happen. There's obviously some cover-up going on. I think he should do the decent thing and go now."

John Major is 48.

Yes! It's Maastricht Rhyming Slang

Maastricht	**Major's arse licked**
Lubbers, Ruud	**UK screwed**
F-word	**Douglas Hurd**
John Major	**Bit of a failure**
Wim Kok	**Unfortunate name for the Dutch Finance Minister**
EMU	**Sod you**
Social Charter	**Non-starter**
Jacques Delors	**Terrific bore**
Mitterrand	**Ennui, grand**
Opt-out clause	**Up yours**
Britain's arse kicked	**Maastricht**

(That's enough slang. Ed.)

The World's Worst Columnist

HAVE you noticed how cold it is all of a sudden? And yet, only a few months ago, we were all of us basking in the sunshine. Could it be something to do with the climate? Makes you think, doesn't it?

☐ *DID you see that idiotic-looking Michael Fish on the TV, telling us that it was going to be cold and that we should be sure to wrap up warm?*

What a stupid moustache he has, to be sure. And can you place any credence at all in a man whose name is Fish? Imagine the name Peter McFish at the head of this column! The punters would think the man who writes it was an idiot.

☐ **I HAVE received a number of cards recently, many of them featuring a fir tree placed in a pot and decorated with coloured baubles. What can it mean? Why are these people writing to me all of a sudden? Is it the weather, I wonder, or should we blame Michael Fish?**

(You're fired. Ed.)

CHILDREN IN NEED

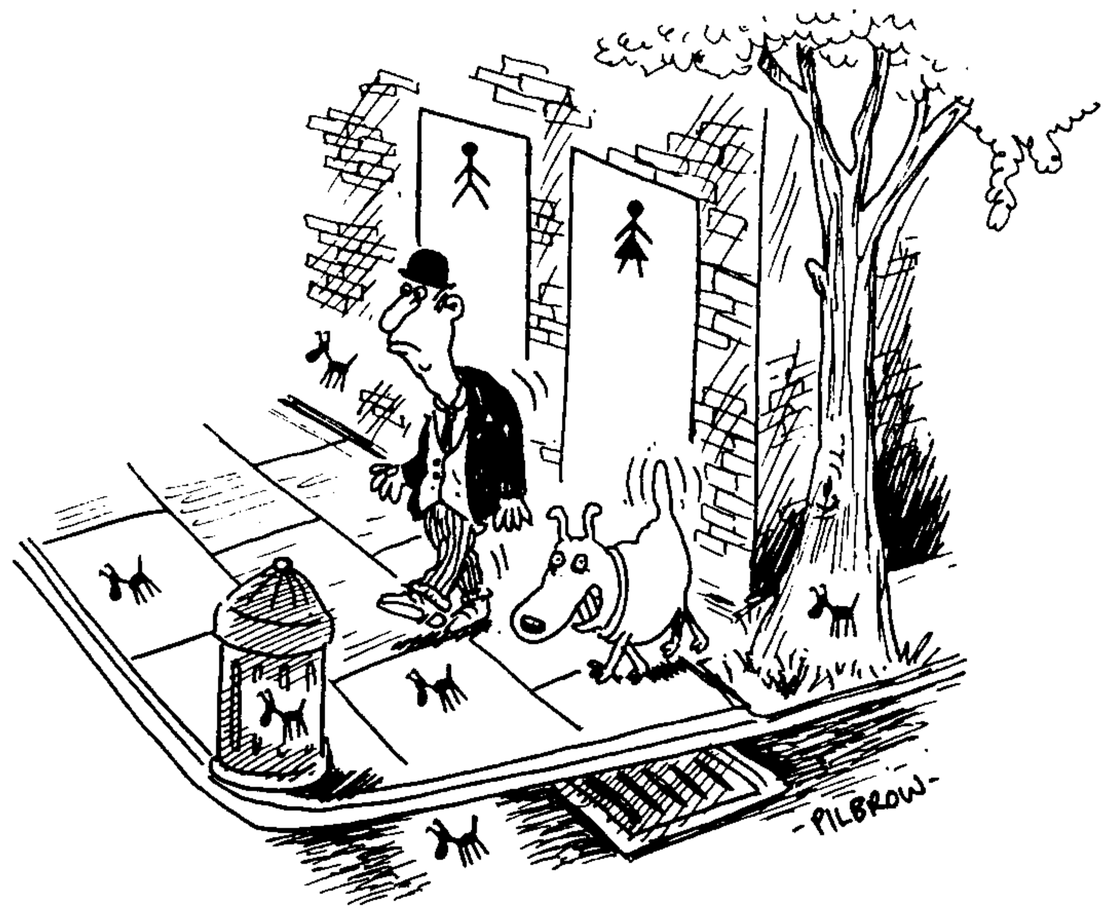
Spare a thought this Christmas for little Kevin and Ian. This time last year they were looking forward to Christmas turkey and vintage champagne. Now they have only the prospect of porridge.

All they will get in their stockings is a letter from the Serious Fraud Office. They are bankrupt, disgraced and have been cruelly treated by their father.

If you have any spare money at this time, for heaven's sake hang on to it.

Issued by Children in Need

(Patron HRH The Esther of Ranthzen)



POETRY CORNER

Lines on the Disintegration of the Soviet Union

So. Farewell
Then
Mikhail Gorbachev.

Famous Russian
Leader.

Glasnost.

That was
Your catchphrase.

Perestroika.

That was
Another.

Gizzajob.

That could
Be your new
One.

E.J. Thribb (17½)

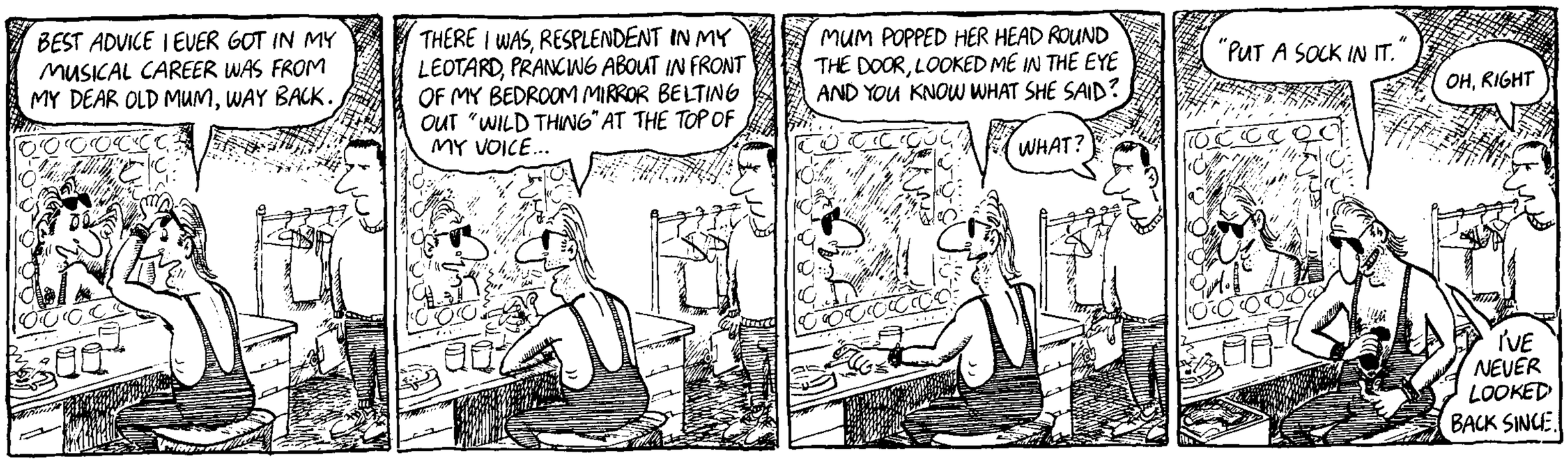
Mark Shivas, head of BBC television drama, said: "This new appointment demonstrates how much importance we place on popular drama." Last week, the BBC announced that it was to spend £160 over the next four years on popular drama and comedy on BBC1.

Great Bores Of Today.

"...you should have listened to the announcements prior to boarding the train the blue One-Day Super-Saver is not valid on the 18.52 Cotswold Express if you wanted to make use of that you should have travelled on the 18.37 and changed at Didcot what I can do is take this ticket and issue you with a one-day full fare to Oxford but you can't return on the same day unless you travel between 19.00 and 21.00 but in any case it would be cheaper to buy the Day Return which works out let me see now no I'm sorry I can't issue you with a ticket which is inclusive of the underground what you have to do when you get to your destination is to take this ticket to desk number nine on the Concourse and they'll exchange it for a one-day Capital Card sorry I don't make the regulations but if you refuse payment I shall have to take your name and address that kind of language won't help you get there any quicker..."

Celeb

LIGGER


BEST ADVICE I EVER GOT IN MY MUSICAL CAREER WAS FROM MY DEAR OLD MUM, WAY BACK.
THERE I WAS, RESPLENDENT IN MY LEOTARD, PRANCING ABOUT IN FRONT OF MY BEDROOM MIRROR BELTING OUT "WILD THING" AT THE TOP OF MY VOICE...
MUM POPPED HER HEAD ROUND THE DOOR, LOOKED ME IN THE EYE AND YOU KNOW WHAT SHE SAID?
WHAT?
"PUT A SOCK IN IT."
OH, RIGHT
I'VE NEVER LOOKED BACK SINCE.

CELEB **— THE BOOK — NOW ON SALE £4.99**

The Secret Maastricht Diary of John Major aged 47¾

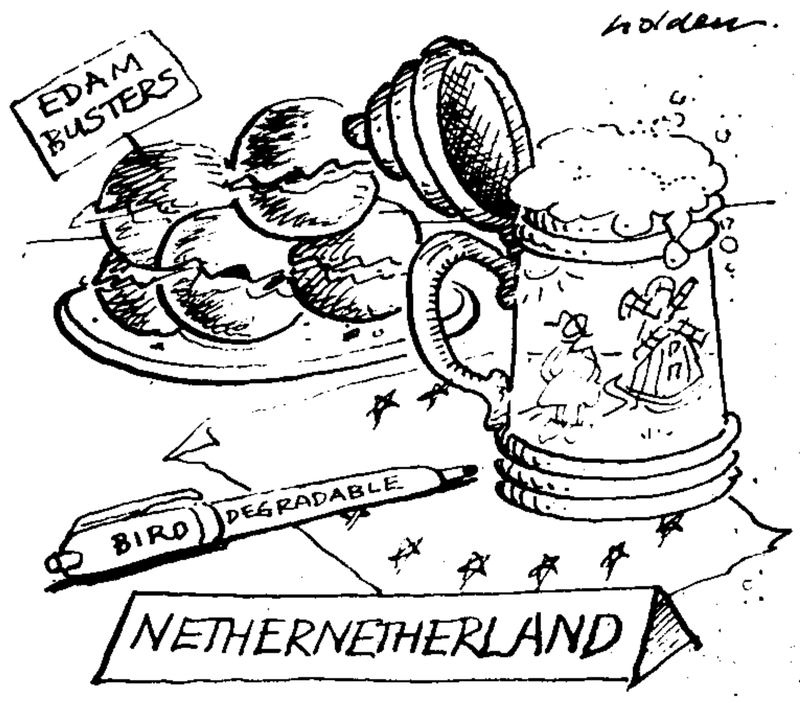
Sunday

Today is the big day I have been waiting for for six months. Mr Hurd is going to tell me what my plan is for the conference at Maastricht. To celebrate I have bought a special new retractable biro to sign the agreement with — if I sign, that is! On the plane to Holland, which I gather is famous for its tulips (though not obviously at this time of year!) they gave us a very nice lunch, even though it was tea-time. While I was trying to undo all the bits of plastic to get at my pastry, Mr Hurd came to sit next to me. "Prime Minister," he said, "it is time to talk Turkey." "Oh," I said. "I was not aware that they are members of the European Community." Mr Hurd looked considerably cross at being caught out again by a non-Oxford man! But he quickly went on to say: "Our aim, John, must be to achieve unity at all costs." "Oh," I replied, "I did not think that you were so much of a Europhile?" "No, you idiot, I mean Prime Minister!" he snapped. "Forget Europe. I was thinking about the party." I did not realise that they had been planning a party to celebrate the signing (if I sign!). But I kept quiet since Mr Hurd looked rather ill at this point, no doubt due to what they call jet lag!

When we had been to our hotel, which was a very attractive modern building made of concrete in the shape of two tulips on each side of a windmill, we went out to a dinner party with my friend Herr Kohl. I was sitting next to Mrs Kohl, whose first name is Frau (like a lot of German ladies, I have noticed). She was a very interesting person to talk to, as she asked me to explain the rules of "your English game cricket". We got along famously. I was able to use the salt and pepper to represent the stumps, and I was just getting to the new front-foot rule when I couldn't help overhearing what Mr Hurd was saying to President Kohl. "So unless you give us a couple of opt-outs there'll be such an uproar that you'll find Maggie back at Number Ten with Ridley as Foreign Secretary." "Achtung, Schweinhund!" he cried, just like Richard Burton does in Where Eagles Dare (which is, incidentally, one of my favourite films, though not Norman's). "What's all this?" I said in my special firm voice, which woke Mrs Kohl up. "What are you two talking about?" "Oh nothing," said Herr Kohl. "Let us drink to your triumph tomorrow!" Whereupon he stood up, clicked his heels and shouted: "Deutschland Uber Alles!", which is apparently the German for "Cheers".

Monday

This morning we went to the place where the famous conference is taking place. It is in a very attractive modern building made of bricks, in the shape of two windmills on each side of a tulip. To get there we had to go in a boat, because the conference centre is on an island. We immediately got down to some very hard negotiating, with Mr Hurd and Mr Lamont explaining to all the



foreign people why they had got it all wrong. For a start, they have spelt the Social Charter with a P! In my judgement, this kind of silly mistake is all too typical of the slapdash approach of these Europeans. I handled the toughest part of all, which was the "single currency" issue. My job was to read out a speech which Mr Hurd had written for me in twelve languages. As I said to them, "No, Non, Nein, Ochi, Nyet, Etc," which I suspect is the Portuguese for "no". My courageous stand had the desired effect. After twelve hours of this, the foreigners all looked at their watches, laughed and said "OK — that's enough time to make it look good, let's sign." Mr Kohl then handed round a leather-bound book with, printed on the front, THE GRAND TREATY OF MAASTRICHT 1991. Inside were all the agreements with the words "except for Great Britain" printed under each of them. I was considerably impressed at the speed with which our Dutch friend Herr Lewd Rubbers (as Mr Lamont calls him) had managed to do the printing so quickly. Herr Kohl winked at Mr Hurd and pointed to me, obviously impressed by the great triumph I had just pulled off. The new biro performed as well as I had hoped, and I decided there and then that I would have it put in a special glass case at Chequers next to the one that Mr Chamberlain used at Munich.

Afterwards the journalists were allowed to come over to the island to be told what had happened, although most of them, for some reason, seemed to know already. Indeed several of them had already managed to have their articles printed; under the headline OH YES — IT'S A TRIUMPH FOR MAJOR.

Wednesday

I was up all night celebrating my triumph with Mr Hurd — in fact it was nearly 11 o'clock before I got to bed. Poor Mr Lamont had to miss the party. He told us that he had to go into town for "a quick lie down".

Thursday

When I told the House of Commons about my great triumph, all our side rose to their feet and waved their papers in the air. Mr Kinnock tried to ruin it by saying that I had totally failed and that Britain was now completely left out of Europe. I soon put him down with a devastating riposte which left him speechless. "Oh no we haven't," I told him (left out, that is) and everyone cheered again. It all goes to show, as I said to Norma later over a celebratory glass of a special Dutch drink which I had bought in the Duty Free called Avocado: "This only goes to show once again how to totally different I am from Mrs Thatcher. She would never have dared to go to a European summit and come away empty-handed, having disagreed with all the other eleven countries. Oh no."

DAILY Mirror

Friday, December 20, 1991 LAST WITH THE NEWS 25p

WORLD EXCLUSIVE

MAXWELL VERY FAT

by Our Investigative Staff RICHARD STOAT, CHARLES WEASEL, MARJE DUPES and JOE SHAMES.

AFTER months of painstaking, no-holds-barred investigation, Mirror newsmen have pieced together the amazing truth behind Robert Maxwell.

- **HE WAS INCREDIBLY FAT**
- **HE PAID US ALL A LOT OF MONEY**
- **HE IS DEAD**
- **THIS MEANS WE CAN ALL NOW SAY HOW FAT HE WAS**

These horrifying revelations must change forever the world's view of the man the world knew as Captain Bob.

We admit it — we were duped.

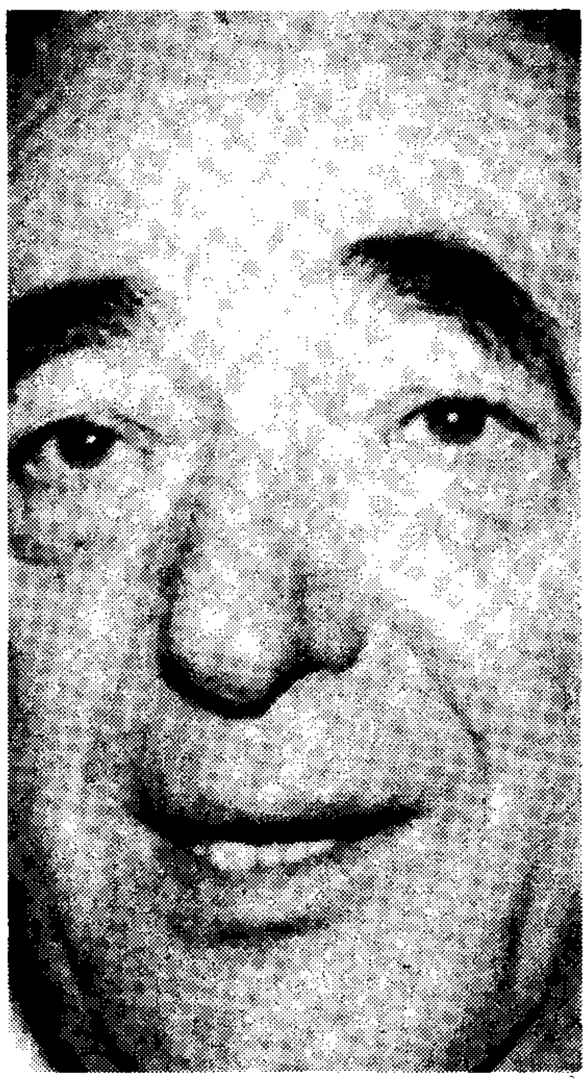
Like millions of others, we thought Maxwell was very thin.

After all, he told us so himself.

Often he would ring us up in the middle of the night and say "I'm thin, aren't I?"

And we'd all say, "Gosh, sir, yes you are — you're the thinnest man on earth."

But now that the full terrifying truth has come to light, thanks to the fearless investigation by the brave Mirror team, we now know that we were hoodwinked.



The Mirror is not ashamed to admit it made an honest mistake.

Who knows what astonishing new facts about Maxwell we will publish tomorrow?

Order your copy of the Sun today.

THE FAT FILE

by Top Investigative Mirrorman PAUL FAT

These are the shocking statistics which prove beyond a shadow of doubt that the late Robert Maxwell was one of the fattest men in the history of the world.

Waist: 217 kilometres

Inside Leg: 2 Hectares

Chest: Empty

Neck: 3,412 ecu

In an average year, Maxwell consumed 28,416 tonnes of food.

We have obtained a top-secret copy of the menu for the mid-morning "snack" consumed by Mr Maxwell on 24 June 1990.

Cap'n Bob's Inter-Meal Sizzler

1 Catering Pack Hainz Half-Baked Beanz

48 kilograms Finest Beluga Caviar

1cwt Tub Finest Lard

Enormous Pudding

INSIDE – ALL YOUR FAVOURITE MIRROR FEATURES

PAUL SPART reporting

The Sad Case of the Defrauded Pensioner

MRS LUDMILLA Tolpuddle, 78, a former employee of a very well-known Fleet Street newspaper, has written to me with a tragic story.

When she went in to collect her pension cheque last month, she was told that there was no more money.

When she asked "Why?" she was told that all the money in the newspaper's pension fund had been stolen by a fat, bloated, caviar-guzzling capitalist swine.

Apparently he had bought the newspaper precisely in order to defraud honest working men and women like Mrs Tolpuddle.

There is no doubt who was to blame for this appalling scandal:

● **Mrs Thatcher and the Tory government.**

By failing to introduce proper legal safeguards on the multi-million-pound pension funds they have created not just one new "Tolpuddle martyr" but a whole generation of them.

YET ANOTHER MISCARRIAGE OF JUSTICE

● **A Mr Kevin M. and his brother Ian have written to me from Ford Open Prison saying that they are totally innocent of the crimes of which they have been accused,.**

After an initial inspection of the files, it is clear to me that "The Maxwell Two" are totally innocent. Why is the Establishment hounding these men, so soon after they have lost their father in a tragic accident?

It is now clear that the only person responsible for the so-called theft of £526 million from the Mirror pension fund was Thatcher.

I appeal to Kenneth Baker to string this woman up now. It is the only language these people understand.

THE THINGS THEY SAY

"I always knew he was a crook — but he provided me with a valuable cheque *(surely 'platform for addressing the working-class audience'? Ed) — Pol Fot*

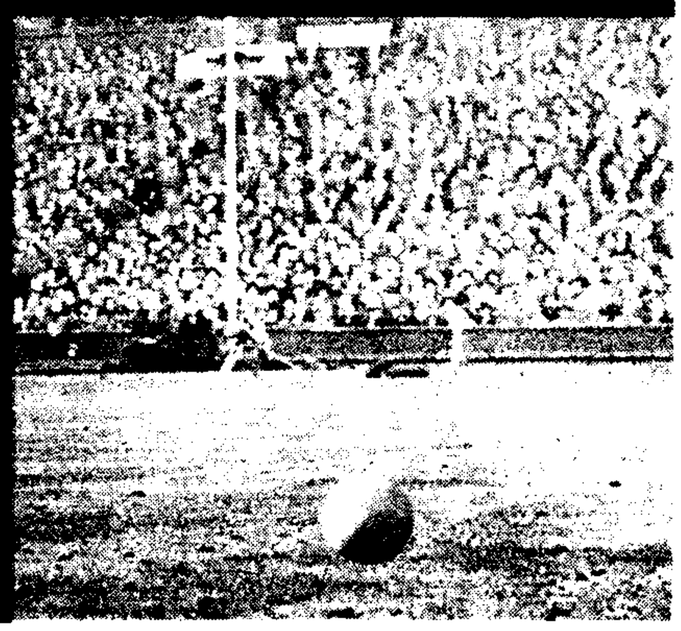
If you would like me to investigate Robert Maxwell, you must be joking. Don't ring me, Paul Foot, on 0898 74387624.

LATE NEWS

Jerusalem — European to be buried on Mount of Olives

FOR the first time in history a newspaper is to receive Israel's highest honour by being buried at the country's most sacred spot, the Mount of Olives. An enormous hole, 586 cubits deep, in accordance with Talmudic law, is to be dug in the side of the mountain to accommodate millions of unsold copies of *The European*. Israel's President Mr Chaim Herzog said: "*The European* was a newspaper of almost mythical boredom. It will be sorely missed by no one at all."

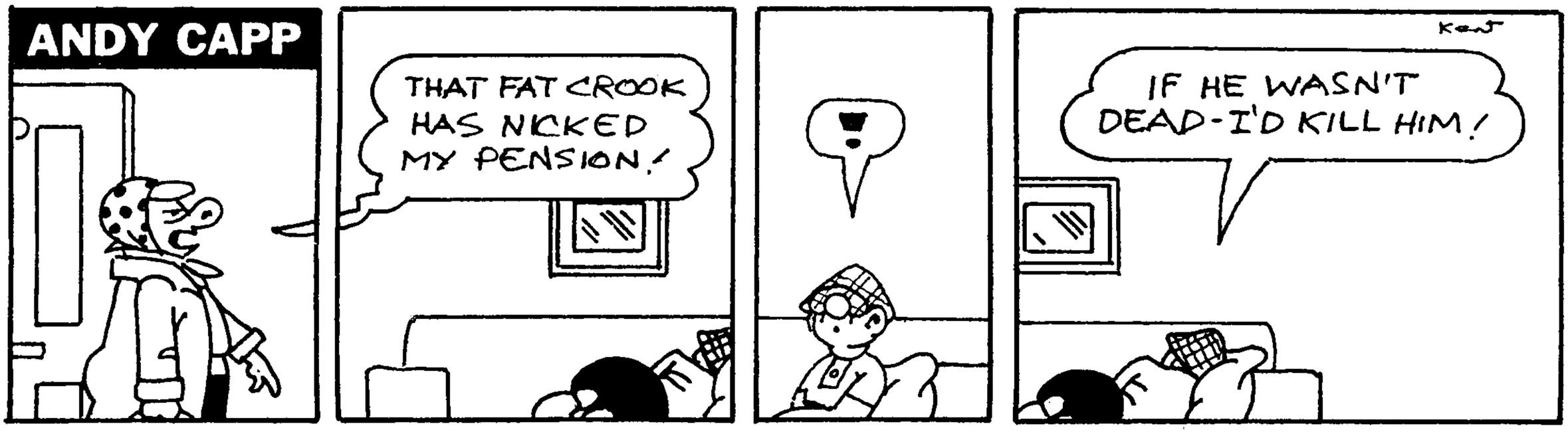
Spot the players and win your own football club!



MIRROR SPORT

RULES OF COMPETITION

LOOK carefully at this picture of a recent match between Oxford United and Derby County. See if you can identify the whereabouts of the players. *(Clue: They have all been sold.)*



My naughty nights with 'The Captain' Joella tells all

"He seduced me and then left me feeling dirty."

That was how a tearful Joella Haynes, 64, described her steamy nights of shame with the world's fattest man.

"To start with, he was charming. During those first weeks he made me feel like a million dollars, which is what he paid me.

"All I had to do, as he put it, was to 'lie with him'.

"He showered me with gifts — I had a desk of my own, a typewriter, a chair, and a lavish supply of paper.

"It was then that he asked me to perform a number of disgusting and unnatural acts in order to gratify him."

Domination

"He expected me to write an obscene book, full of outrageous fantasies, called *Maxwell — Portrait Of A Genius*.

"And still he wasn't satisfied. When we had finished, he wanted more. He wanted *Portrait Of A Genius Vol. 2*.

"He wanted a column at least once a week — it was exhausting.

"Wherever I was in the world, he would ring up in the middle of the night, telling me to 'put it in' or 'take it out'. It was disgusting. I began to feel used."

Crossing her legs provocatively in her 18th-floor office at the *Daily Mirror* building, Joella said defiantly: "I won't do just anything for money. I'm not a prostitute, you know.

"This whole business has been the most terrible shock to me," she concluded. "After all, it is not every day you discover what a terrible creep you are."

Circulation War Crime Trial continues **Day 59**

'I AM INNOCENT' claims Damjayjerk

by Our Man In Court
IVAN THE TERRIBLE CONSCIENCE

THE MAN who many believe was the hated chief-of-staff to Captain Robert Maxwell went on trial today, accused of "grotesque toadying beyond the call of duty". A number of employees came forward, pointing the finger at Damjayjerk and accusing him of creating a reign of terror.

Damjayjerk, who claims his real name is Sir Peter Jay, sat impassively as the string of witnesses continued to give their evidence. Many said they had been brutally treated by Jay, even sacked for no reason at all. A moment of high drama came when a Mr Bowyer, a biographer, appeared in the witness box and accused Damjayjerk of subjecting him to years of harassment, during which his telephone was bugged, his office broken into, and his informants menaced.

At this, Damjayjerk sprang to his feet, angrily denying the charges and denouncing Bowyer.

"It is a lie!" he cried. "I only ever worked as a car park attendant, making sure there was a space for Mr Maxwell's car. He was always good to me and gave me money. But I know nothing of what went on outside my little hut in the car park. I vos only obeying orders."

The trial continues.

MAXWELL CAR PARKS PLC

Name: Sir Peter Jay

Rank: Senior Car Park Attendant

Number: 073742187

The above person is authorised to ensure the security of the Maxwell personal automobile, ROB 1, at all times day and night.

The evidence that the prosecution claims is a forgery

WIN WITH THE MIRROR!

This 68-year-old pensioner from Oxford won a staggering

£526 million

from the Mirror, just by filling in a form.

Mr R.M. asked for no publicity for his world record win. He told the Mirror: "I would like this kept quiet." But he admitted that he was planning a cruise to the Canary Islands.

He added: "The £526 million will not make any difference to my life, because I owe four times that amount already."

HEIR OF SORROWS

BY

SYLVIE KRIN

THE STORY SO FAR: It is Christmas lunch in the Banqueting Hall of Windsor Castle.

Now read on...

A LIGHT covering of snow had dusted the ancient battlements of the great granite fortress and a slate-grey sky was but a canvas for the pale orange sun which seemed to float evanescently *(Get on with the lunch, Ed.)*

The whole family were seated at the centuries old oak table said to have been a gift of the saracen warrior prince Muhammed Al Fayed to Richard Coeur de Lion on his triumphal entry into the city of Yentob in the Frankish kingdom of *(Will you please get on with it, Ed.)*

Charles took a mouthful of his individual portion of Turkey-style free-range yoghurt which had been specially provided by the royal chef, Gaston d'Embonpoint. Charles gazed with benign affection at the familiar Yuletide scene. His father, resplendent in the full dress uniform of Chief of Staff of the National Car Parks, sat with his head buried in a plate full of roast panda, a half-empty glass of vintage Burnet's Tawny Nose Late Bottled Port by his outstretched hand. Beside Charles sat the Duchess Fergiana tucking into a solitary lettuce leaf in accordance with the *Hello* magazine "Be As Slim As Princess Di" diet. His brother Edward, attempting to memorize a joke from one of the already opened crackers. Prince Andrew, his young seaman's face flushed in the glow of the blazing log fire which crackled and spat like some vast medieval brazier, trying on a series of paper hats. And at the head of the table, seated in the bejewelled throne of the Tractenbergs, the monarch herself, busy as always with last-minute corrections to her Christmas speech, which she was keying into her Korgi Lap-Top WP 7000 (a gift from Sir Gerald de Ronson).

An unwelcome touch of the modern world in this traditional setting, Charles couldn't help but think, yet still perhaps, as his new PR person Melinda Harpey had said in one of their now regular tête-a-têtes, one *did* have to move with the times. What had she said... "chill with the brothers"? She was awfully in touch with the youth of today.

"What's it to be then?" said the Duke, stirring himself from the remains of the panda, to address his wife. "Commonwealth again? Family of Nations? Usual Guff?"

The Queen eyed him distastefully over her half-moon gold-framed Oldie lorgnettes.

"I think this year my theme will be the new Europe," she announced.

"Dullzo, eh, Di?" interrupted the

theatrical prince, Edward, nudging his sister-in-law Diana who immediately turned up the volume on her Walkman.

"No, no." Charles admonished. "Mater is absolutely right on this one. The idea of a unified Europe is tremendously sort of exciting, it goes back to Christendom... and the Holy Roman thingie... When you think about it the idea of a sort of fragmented warring continent is sort of... er... er... er..."

"Appalling," prompted the deferential equerry, Captain Stephen Jeeves, as he replenished Charles's glass of non-alcoholic Elderflower lager.

"Yes," said Charles, "that's very much the *mot juste*."

"Indeed it is, sir" soothed the discreet factotum.

"Did Sir Laurens ever write about this sort of federal business?"

"Indeed he did Sir. You will remember his seminal tome *Travels with the Eton Boatmen* in which he remarks 'pull, pull together'?"

"How true that is," Charles enthused. "Spot on Jeeves."

Jeeves shimmered away and Charles continued, warming to his European theme:

"You see, Mater, I'm so glad we agree on this. We have to look forward, the breaking down of boundaries, the pooling of resources, the joint action over the environment... Melinda put it all in this pack for me... I've got it in my room."

At the mention of the name of Charles's new adviser, Prince Andrew leered at his brother.

"Melinda, eh, Chazza? I hear she's a real Christmas cracker! Wallop!"

Diana's peach-like skin flushed red and she bit her lip. Luckily Edward covered the awkward silence as he had now mastered the joke from his handmade Littlejohn cracker.

"Here's one! What does an Essex girl say when she changes a light bulb?"

"Shut up boy!" The Duke commanded, rapping his son on the knuckles with the panda bone he was picking clean.

"Yes, do be quiet," agreed Charles. "Mater's got to concentrate on her speech. After all it's going to be terribly historic when everyone sees that she is backing this tremendous new adventure into Europe."

"I wish you'd shut up Charles," his mother demanded without so much as lifting her eyes from her liquid-crystal display. "You do talk the most awful balderdash sometimes."

Edward laughed and made a raspberry sound by letting the air out of a pink dayglo balloon. The Queen ignored him and began to lecture her heir.

"Who do you think will be out of a job, Charles, if there's a united Europe? They are already trying to get us off the stamps and the banknotes. By the time you take over... *IF* you take over..." The Queen paused and laughter broke out around the table, "your head won't even be on the ECU."

They all roared at Charles' discomfiture but as ever Edward's voice was the loudest.

"Wrong again, Bro! Hey everyone! I've got another joke here. "What's got big ears and a red face? And it's *NOT* an elephant with high blood pressure, ha, ha, ha..."

Even the fire seemed to crackle with laughter as the whole family dissolved into pearls of Yuletide mirth.

(To be continued)

RAPE CASE

KENNEDY FOUND GUILTY

by Our Man In Palm Beach
Lunchtime O'Bar

AFTER only two minutes of deliberation, the whole world yesterday brought in a "guilty" verdict against Senator Edward Kennedy on 29 charges of "gross humbug".

The Senator had earlier told the court of how on the evening in question he had been in deep mourning for the death of "the little dog which belonged to a close friend of my aunt — who was of course related by marriage to my two brothers, Jack and the other one, who are both, of course, tragically deceased".

At this point the Senator took out an onion and wept uncontrollably on the witness stand for several minutes, while violins played softly.

The Senator explained: "Why, ah was so overcome with grievin', that ah knew I could never rest mah head on the pillow until ah'd been out with ma boys for a few beers and maybe a piece of ass."

The judge, Her Honour Mary-Lou Massingberd, then asked the Senator to repeat his last sentence in case she had not heard it correctly.

"Ah mean," he replied, "ah had gone out to console mahself and mah family with some non-alcoholic beverages and perhaps to meet up with some sympathetic young bereavement counsellors at the Bonk-a-Gogo Beachside bar."

The case, which has caught the imagination of the entire civilised world with its heady mix of bra and panties *(Cont'd. p.94)*

THAT ENGLAND WORLD CUP DRAW IN FULL

A DISAPPOINTED Graham Taylor, England's ashen-faced supremo, said that England's chances of qualifying for the 1994 World Cup had suffered a serious setback following the live draw on television yesterday.

A tight-lipped Taylor said:

"No one in this game underestimates the East Timor squad or the part-timers from Transylvania. I've watched Antarctica in a friendly and I tell you we'll have our work cut out trying to shut down Igloo Iglooson, their No. 10 shirt."

Over the Moon

When asked whether or not England could realistically expect to play a part in the finals in the USA, Taylor responded gloomily: "You can't take anything for granted. I've heard people say that the Moon hasn't got any players. But then neither have we."

Bryan Robson is 107.

Group 94

East Timor
Ngorny-Karabach
Transylvania
ENGLAND
Chad
Antartica
The Moon

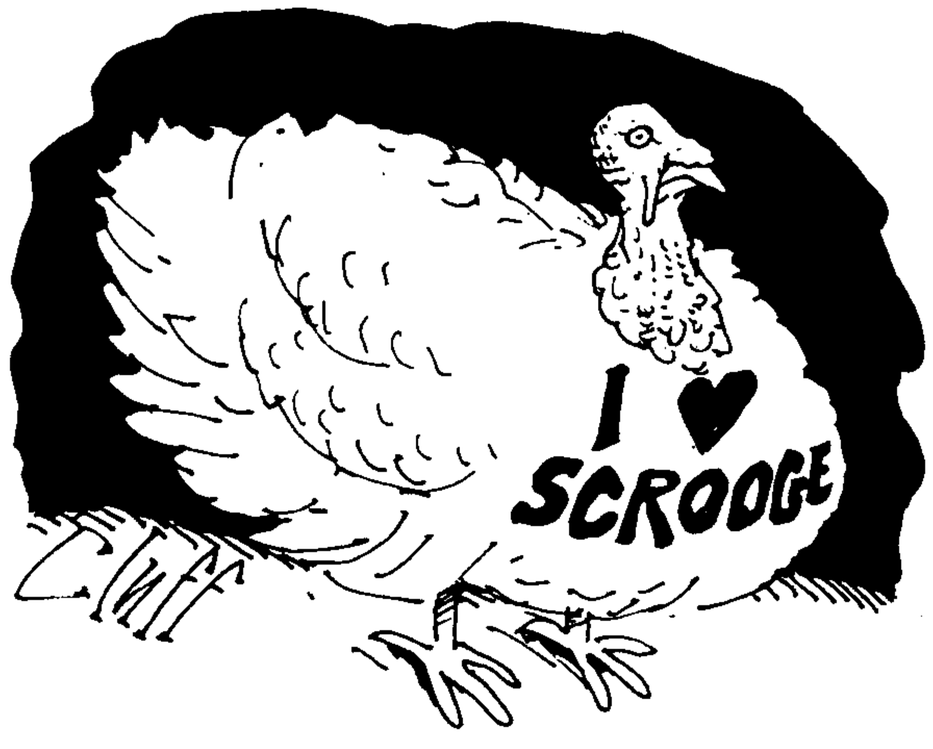
A High Court Judge Writes

Every week a well-known High Court Judge is invited to kick a taxi driver of his choice.

This week: **His Honour Sir Leroy Gascoyne "Gazza" Montgomery-Gazzingberd**

Those cabdrivers have got a nerve, do they not? Arriving at one's house in the middle of the night, merely because one has telephoned for them. I put it to you, that there is only one language such people can comprehend, or so you may think. That is, that they should be taken to a place of execution and hanged by the neck until the Appeal Court finds that they are innocent. I had that Kevin Maxwell in the back of my court once. A very nice young man.

NEXT WEEK: *Lord Justice Winston "Springsteen" Denningbird.*



THE COMPLETE FIB AND LIE DIET **— THE BEST OF *PRIVATE EYE* '89-91 — £4.99 IN ALL GOOD BOOKSHOPS**

MAJOR'S TRIUMPH

— HOW IT WAS REPORTED BY THE EUROPEAN PRESS

France-Pissoir

TRIOMPHE POUR MITTERRAND

Frankfurter Mit Seuf

TRIOMF FÜR KOHL

Bolbs und Bolbmen

TRIØMPH VOR LUBBERS

IL INDEPENDENTE DI ROMA

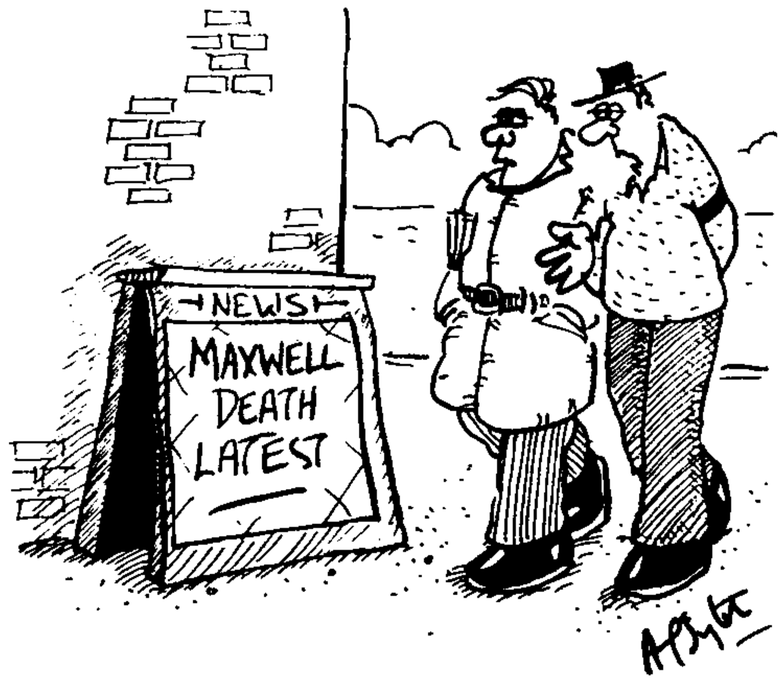
TRIOMFO POR ANDREOTTI

(Amsterdam) THE EUROPEAN

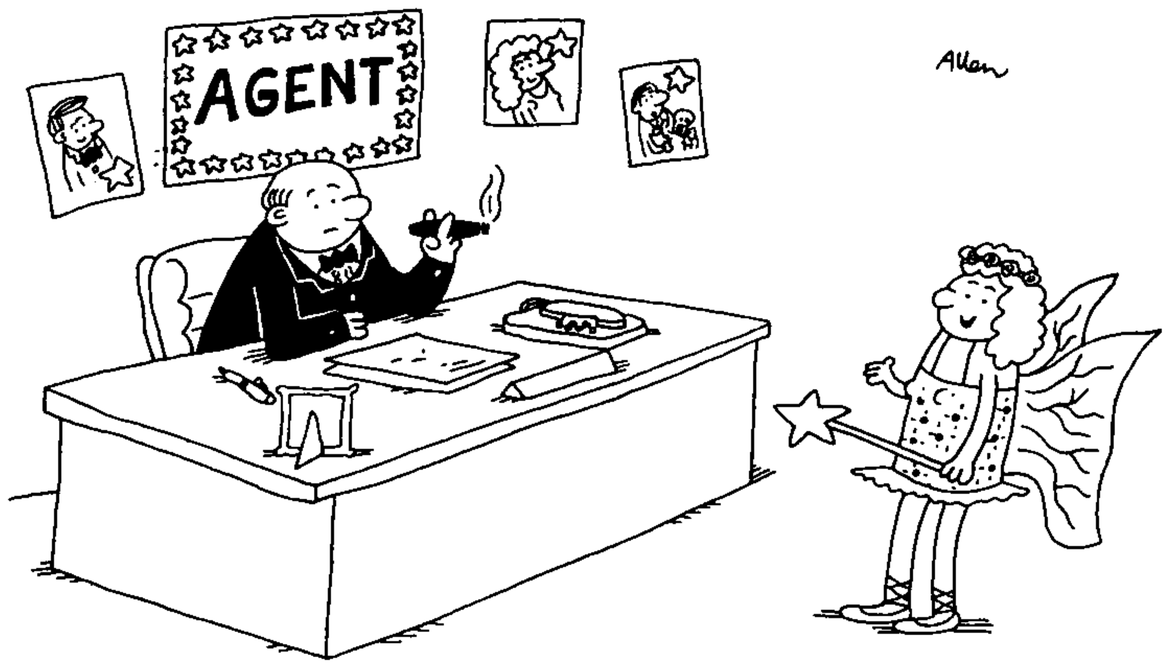
FOR SALE

Gnomemart A Warning

If you purchased one or more cartons of the Yodelling Yoghurt of Maastricht advertised in our issue of 3 December, we would like to advise you that those cartoons bearing the serial nos. 074/X/2364 or 17 have been found to be subject to a manufacturing fault in the yodelling mechanism sealed in the base of the container. This has resulted in small quantities of pyrotecstasene leaking into the main compartment of the carton, causing the contents to taste quite good. Any suspect cartons should be returned immediately to the manufacturers who will replace them with a CD of Brahms's C-Major String Trio Op. 94 played by William Kennedy and the Palm Beach String-Em-Up Quartet.



"No man is an island..."



"I'd like to audition for Frank Bruno's next fight"

POINTS OF VIEW

with

ANNE ROBINSON

(Trendy graphics and silly music. Perky redheaded woman with squeaky voice appears)

ANNE ROBINSON *(for it is she):* Hello again. A lot of viewers have written in to ask if I am the same Anne Robinson who works for the *Daily Mirror*. Typical is this letter from Mrs Brian Perkins of Leatherhead.

NEWSREADER *(in patronising voice)*: "Dear Anne: I could not believe my eyes when I saw the dishonest drivel that you had written about the death of Robert Maxwell. You said he was your "hero". How dare you? He was a filthy crook and you *still* won't admit it."

(Cut back to studio)

ANNE ROBINSON: Well, Mrs Perkins. You've certainly got your knickers in a twist and no mistake. What a silly woman you must be with nothing better to do than sit around writing petty letters to the BBC. But you're not alone, Mrs Perkins! *(Makes stupid face to camera)* This pathetic whinge came from a Mrs Harry Thompson of Cocteau Crescent, Coventry.

NEWSREADER *(with sneering lisp)*: "Dear Anne: Could we see again the moment when it was revealed that Cap'n Bob was a terrific conman and you just smiled and said you didn't believe it? It was hilarious. My husband said it was the funniest thing he had seen since *Dad's Army*."

(Cut back to studio)

ANNE ROBEMBLIND: Well, Mrs Thompson. There's a limit to free speech, as Robert Maxwell used to say, and you'll be hearing from my solicitors. Now let's have a sensible letter from Mrs Took of London.

NEWSREADER *(in sensible voice)*: "Dear Anne: Is it not rather shameful that the BBC's Economics Editor Peter Jay should not merely have failed to expose the biggest financial story of the decade but should have actively covered it up? Should he not be fired, along with you?"

(Cut back to studio)

ANNE ROBINSON *(flying into rage):* I'll get you! I'll squash you like a fly, Mrs Wigwam...

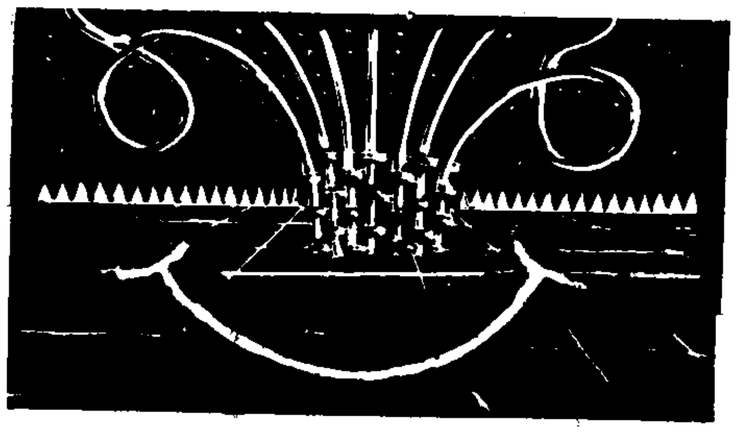
(Screen goes blank)

The BBC Pronunciation Guide

How It Is Spelt	How It is Pronounced
Maastricht	Mar-streect
Maaxwell	Crook
Mikhail Gorbachev	Wosh-dup
Nursultan Nazarbayer	Haagen-Dazs

A cassette of Sue McGregor giving the officially approved pronunciation of these and hundreds more "names in the news" is available from BBC Enterprises, price £57.99.

DIARY



HAROLD PINTER

Happy Christmas, they say. Not just Christmas. Oh, no. Not just Christmas. But *Happy* Christmas. Sometimes the hypocrisy of these people is so sickening it makes me want to vomit.

Let me explain as best I can using words. My wife Lady Antonia and I were in a large department store in that area of London between South Kensington and Piccadilly. We were considering the purchase of Christmas gifts for an acquaintance of ours aged within the region of six years old. After some thought, I had in mind something black. But I did not know what.

"Black," I said to the woman in her forties behind the counter. "I want something black."

"Black?" she said.

"Yes," I said. "Something black. I want something black. Something black is what I want. What I want is something black."

"This is the toy department," she countered. "There's not much black here. A police car, I suppose."

"A police car?" I said to the woman in her forties. "A pig car? I suppose you want me to buy torturing irons as well? And electric shock equipment? And a gun to shoot down innocent men? Is that it? IS THAT IT? Come on, Lady Antonia, we're not staying to hear any of this crap any more, get your coat. I've never been so offended in my life."

We exited that minute, Antonia stopping certainly no more than three minutes to order a couple of new corner-cushions from the soft furnishings department and then we stormed out in disgust. "I agree with you, Harold," agreed Antonia. "And I'm certainly never shopping *here* again except on Tuesdays and Fridays."

We bought our acquaintance aged within the region of six years something more suitable elsewhere. A pair of dark glasses and a Christmas card, also in black. I wrote inside: "Wishing you a not too unhappy Christmas, the present Tory Junta permitting." In case he felt like celebrating, I enclosed a paper hat, also in black.

For Christmas lunch this year, we plan to commemorate the atrocities committed during the Gulf War in the name of the New World Order. My wife, Lady Antonia, has ordered a salmon mousse to start with, shaped like a Scud Missile. We are then having the traditional Christmas Turkey but I have made it perfectly clear that we will none of us eat a mouthful for as long as there are still political prisoners being tortured in the prisons of Turkey. We will have traditional Christmas crackers with the mince pies containing paper armbands and seasonal riddles such as:

Q: Why is the USA an imperialist warmonger intent on subjugating all Third World nations by removing all their powers of self-determination?

A: Because it bloody is. It's so bloody obvious I'm not prepared to bloody discuss it further.

Incidentally, as a gesture of support for the Birmingham 6, plus the Guildford 4, plus the Tottenham 3, plus the Liverpool 8, we will be serving a '21 Port with the cigars.

For the past six months I have been working on a new thirty-second play about torture in Holland Park. Okay, okay, these days there isn't a lot of torture in Holland Park. So let no one try and tell you my plays don't get things changed.

Contrary to the malignant disinformation spread by the propagandist forces of the present administration, the June 20th Group is still going strong. Its meetings, I must tell you, have never been more constructive, never more single-minded in their determination to bring down the cold-blooded torturers and mass-murderers who at present speak in our names.

Inevitably there have been one or two changes to the personnel structure of the group. I suspected a leak to the fascist press from the Bragg enclave, so I was forced to sever all relations with them. Through a close reading of the newspapers, I discovered that the Holroyd/Drabble/Greer/Weldon pressure-group had perpetrated a hypocritical deceit on the rest of us, two of them — Holroyd and Drabble — having been married five years before. So I washed my hands of them. At an early meeting at the River Cafe, John Mortimer wished to veto my resolution condemning the junta in Nicaragua in order to push through a motion urging second helpings of puds all round. This was the last straw. "Get your coat, Lady Antonia. I'm not taking any more of this crap. We're leaving," I said. And so we split with Mortimer too. Finally, Hare and McEwan disagreed with me over my support for an out-and-out condemnation of Vaclav Havel for sending good wishes to Mrs Bloody Thatcher on her retirement, and Rushdie can never be bothered to turn up, so we're not seeing them any more. So the June 20th Group is left with a strong kernel of supporters — never stronger in my opinion — formed of:

1) Harold Pinter

2) Lady Antonia Fraser

with:

3) Lady Elizabeth Anson

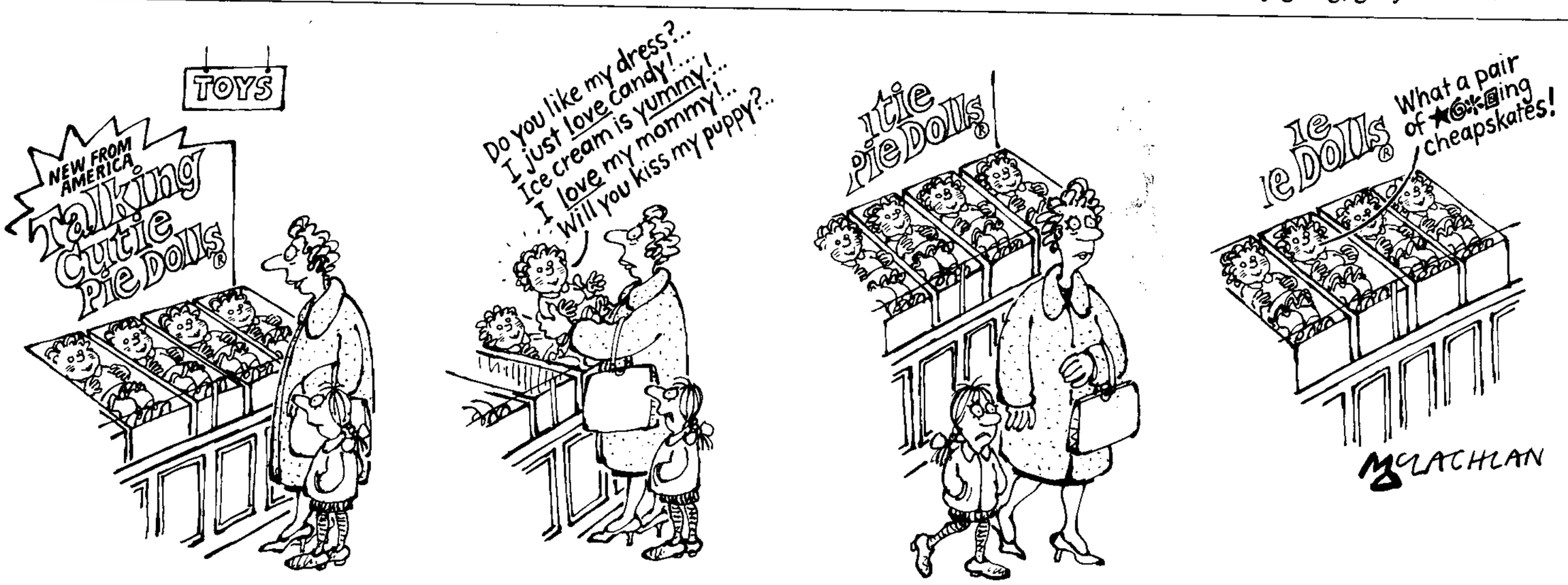
(the latter being employed as the Official Outsider Caterer to the June 20th Group, specifically to handle food and seating arrangements). These days, Antonia is finding she has to spend more and more time researching her new Jemima Shore series, so the group discussions are generally attended by myself alone. And let me tell you this: we are *angry*.

Ordinary life is filled with the threat of a lurking menace. Everywhere, the nuances of everyday conversation contain gaps behind which the unknowable prowls, unseen and unheard, ready to spring out. Yesterday, I was sitting at my desk, a man of sixty. A sudden howl filled the air. Relentless, interminable. Then — bang, bang, bang — a machine was knocking, again and again, against the door. Whooooooo! BANG! BANG! BANG! Whooooooo! The howl. The knocking. Was it Them? What did They want? What would They do to me?

I moved to the door.

I opened it.

"Ah, Fatima." It was our Filipina doing a spot of hoovering. "You're a lurking menace!" I thundered. "C'mon, Antonia, we're not staying here, we're bloody going, get your coat!"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Literary Review

Dwarfing the opposition

Witches Abroad
Terry Pratchett
(Gollancz, £13.99)

FANTASY, that grim and desolate genre, has many mansions, battalions of highly-paid practitioners — Donaldson, Brooks *et al* — and a surprisingly narrow frame of reference.

Godfather Tolkein, who flourished his magic wand (or rather didn't flourish it — more of this later) and gave birth to the whole business 40 years ago, would doubtless be appalled by the chronically limited imaginative range of his successors.

From countless high-walled watchgates the watchers continue to watch, small anthropomorphic animals creep stealthily through the furry undergrowth, Grishnakh the orc assiduously polishes his single fang, the wraiths gibber uneasily in their lairs. It is a quaint, stylised world.

Terry Pratchett might, on the face of it, seem to overcome the limitations imposed by influence and lack of creative discipline. Certainly the reviewers seem to think so ("a sequence of unalloyed delight" according to the *Guardian*). Public enthusiasm remains boundless. *Witches Abroad* and the recently released paperback *Moving Pictures* (Corgi £3.99) entered their respective bestseller lists at Number 1. Another six months and there will be another couple. One of Pratchett's distinguishing marks is his facility — an ex-newspaperman living in Somerset, he knocks them out at an astonishing rate. This is the eleventh Discworld novel in four years.

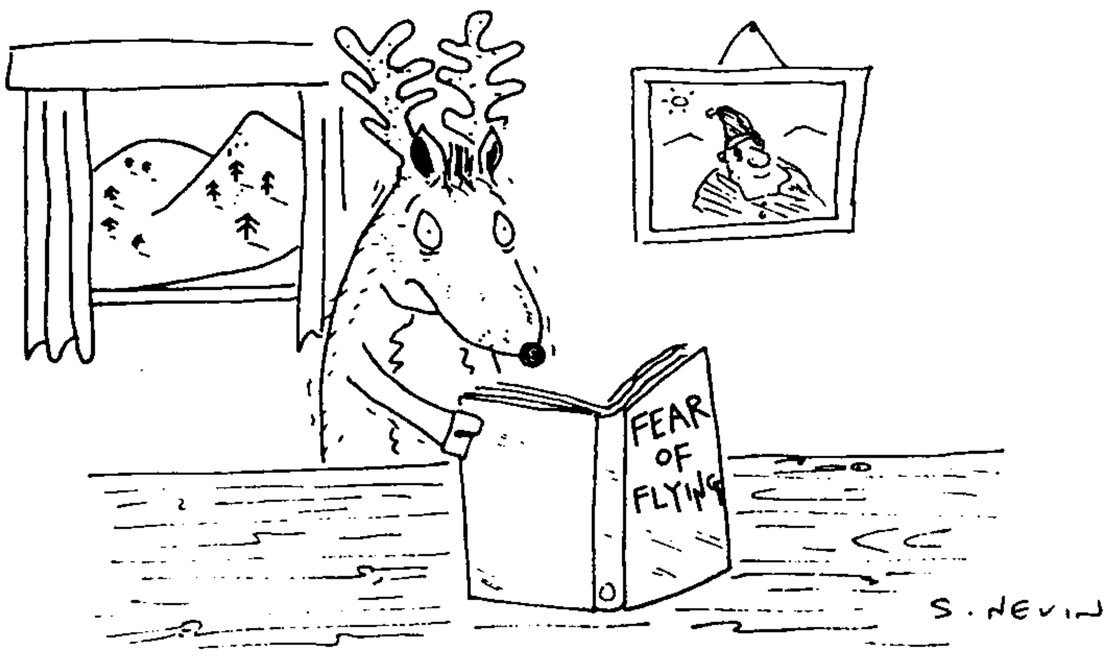
Bracketing Pratchett with the capering goblin brigade is a touch unfair. His books tap a gentler, more whimsical vein, rooted in a particular school of English humour — the Lear/Carroll school — rather than in diluted Tolkein. The description of the Discworld itself — it "travels through space on the back of four elephants which themselves stand on the shell of Great A'Tuin, the sky turtle" — is a fair example of the light, airy nonsense in which he deals. *Clever* nonsense, it should be said — in contrast to beetle-browed fellow fantasists, Pratchett is quite capable of wheeling in wide-awake observations about narrative function. There are any number of droll footnotes about "urban myth".

What emerges is not so much fantasy as fancy. *Witches Abroad*, in particular, might be described as a tremendous skit on the idea of the fairy-tale, in which three witches head off to distant Genua with the aim of preventing the servant girl from marrying the prince. Their magic wand is capable only of transforming matter into pumpkins. En route they stray, inevitably, into other fairy tales — Little Red Riding Hood, the enchanted castle and the sleeping princess — and have a tremendous time interfering with them. The humour comes when contemporary fads and catchphrases appear before the abracadabra backdrop — a stolid peasant suggesting that money forges the chains which bind the labouring classes, or another character maintaining that "witches are non-hierarchical".

This Hans Christian Anderson meets the *Guardian* letters page conceit can be extremely funny. The dwarf mining engineers are a scream and there is a running gag about people not living up to their roles (the inhabitants of Genua are punished for not conforming to their fairy tale archetypes; the toymaker arraigned for *not* telling stories to children and so on).

Sustaining it beyond 200 pages, though, is quite impracticable, not because Pratchett lacks ingenuity — the gags keep coming — but because the world thereby defined has no solid foundation. The very best fantasy, from Tolkein to Beatrix Potter, succeeds by emerging out of a recognisable reality, having an extra dimension grafted on to a landscape with which the reader is already familiar. When anything can happen, when natural phenomena can be sidestepped merely by someone saying *shazam* and discipline vanishes, all that remains is the joke.

A certain amount of twee, self-conscious mock-philosophy ("Mirrors give plenty, but they take away a lot") lurks here and there. A good adjective to describe the whole would be "hippy". Pratchett courts banality. Eventually it enfolds him in a stifling embrace.



BOOKS & BOOKMEN

☐ **APOLOGIES to readers for the mistaken layout of two paragraphs in the last Literary Review which made gibberish of the end of the Books of the Year piece.**

Talking of which, it's not quite true any more that there's been no log rolling in books of the year choices this year. In the second tranche, several lumberjacks have done their best, despite the rottenness of the logs.

Roger Scruton chose a book he had published himself, *Oakeshott* by Robert Grant, not once but twice, in both the *Sunday Telegraph* and the *TLS*. Christopher Hitchens, in the *TLS*, chose *Time's Arrow* ("shows what can be done with a fictional imagination; has the brio and confidence to essay the unimaginable") by his dear old mucker, Martin Amis. Craig Raine, former poetry editor at Faber, chose the lousy poems ("disgracefully misreviewed everywhere", he protested) of his friend Christopher Reid, the *current* poetry editor of Faber, published by Faber. Jonathan Raban picked bearded Bill Buford's *Among the Slags*, admitting cheerfully to being both a chum and a contributor to Buford's *Granta*.

In the *Spectator*, Lord Lambton chose a dreary life of Elizabeth I by his friend Lady Anne Somerset: "I cannot think of a better Christmas present for any intelligent man or woman," he warned. A certain Mark Archer chose *Pagan Virtue: An Essay In Ethics* ("leaves one pondering life, luck and the cosmos for several weeks after") by his mentor at Cambridge, John Casey — a book unaccountably overlooked elsewhere.

The wonderfully dim literary editor of the *Financial Times*, J.D.F. Jones, despite being "too overwhelmed to see things clear", homed in on a novel by James Buchan, a former journalist on — you guessed it — the *Financial Times*. Rachel Billington simply chose *The Scramble For Africa* ("scholarly and readable") by Thomas Pakenham, her bro.

The *Sunday Telegraph's* page was a delicious chocolate log fiesta, all nods and winks. It was Margaret Drabble's choice of the third volume of that wretched biography of Shaw by her hubbie, Michael Holroyd. "I read it over the summer and when I finished it I wept," she reported. With shame?

But this was not the most embarrassing eruption. For this distinction, there were two contenders. Douglas Hurd did wonderfully well with his description of his approach to books, in the *Daily Telegraph*. "I flit and sip," he said. Keep saying it quickly and you gain a rare insight into the mind of this lovely man. But Hurd was pipped at the post by a dippy trout called Barbara Neil, also in the *Telegraph*. Choosing *The Writing Life* by Annie Dillard, she said "When my own work is in paralysis I open this potent volume and inhale." Quite right too. A perfectly adequate reading method for this year's books. Just don't breathe too deeply.

■ THE KEY to Anthony Cheetham's enigmatic character may be that he chose to write a biography of *Richard III* for Lady Magnesia's series on the kings and queens of England in the Seventies. The book was published more by Weidenfeld than Nicolson.

One of Skinny's last executive decisions at Random Century, before he was dispatched by the poisoned hair conditioner, was to secure for the group the distribution of the Everyman Library in its deceptively elegant new hardback format (within the white covers, the old type is recycled), the rights to which had been acquired by Cheetham's friend David Campbell from Lord Popeye. Popeye, who had bought Everyman publishers J.M. Dent a few years back, rather bizarrely retained the rights to publish the series in paperback, although Weidenfeld & Nicolson were and are a hardback house. This probably explains why it is so difficult to find Everyman paperbacks in bookshops.

Ever since Skinny was an editor at Sphere, before creating Futura at Macdonald and inheriting the Arrow list at Hutchinson, he has wanted to run a premier paperback imprint. Arrow sporadically looked as if it would achieve this, but never really made it in the premier division of Penguin, Pan and Corgi, largely because it couldn't sustain a respectable backlist. But in buying Popeye's outfit Sir Anthony instantly acquires a list of 1,000-odd paperback classics which he can expand and realise his ambition of taking on the gargantuan and somewhat complacent Penguin.

'Bookworm'

MAN IN THE EYE: Larry Trachtenberg

LARRY TRACHTENBERG, the mystery American at the centre of the Maxwell pensions fraud scandal, was supposedly hired by Cap'n Bob for his towering intellect. According to former colleagues, however, his only towering attribute is his ego.

In 1985, after leaving the London School of Economics where he had been a lecturer, he set up an on-line daily business and financial information company, Global Analysis Systems (GAS), with fellow American and LSE lecturer Andrew Smith, the latter's father being a leading light in the German banking world.

GAS was supposed to supply subscribers with economic and political analysis covering around 100 countries worldwide. The information was to flow daily down telephone lines direct to clients' computer terminals under a service dubbed International Investment Monitor (IIM). Operating from rooftop offices in the City adjacent to Smithfield meat market, the duo managed to recruit Lord King as a director of GAS, and with the help of Trachtenberg's business acumen the company began to lose money hand over fist.

Trachtenberg struggled to get a simple computer network up and running; but his failures meant the GAS hacks had to work a stressful 18-hour day using manual methods: one who couldn't take the strain hurled a computer terminal out of a window. Fortunately, it landed on a passing beef carcass four floors below.

GAS's turnover — of staff anyway — was impressive and the 20 or so hacks eventually rebelled over hours and conditions. An NUJ chapel was formed and pressed for union recognition. Trachtenberg and Smith, for their part, lectured the staff about the need for loyalty and commitment.

Enter those peerless saviours, Cap'n Bob and his son Kevin (known as Kev). They retained Trachtenberg and Smith as directors. The losses continued, while the staff continued to press for union recognition. In Christmas 1987 Trachtenberg assured everyone that GAS was safe in his hands — a few days later he announced that all salary cheques for the Christmas period had unfortunately bounced owing to a computer error and a slight cash-flow problem. GAS had well and truly arrived inside the Bouncing Czech's empire.

GAS moved into plush open-plan offices on the first floor of Orbit House, part of the Maxwell complex at Holborn Circus. The few hacks occupied the acres of floorspace which had recently been vacated by journalists from the aborted *London Daily News*.

One evening, Maxwell appeared in the GAS offices surrounded by fawning minions and a visiting dignitary. "What's this? Where's *The European*? he boomed. One lackey explained proudly: "This is Global Analysis." "Global what???" retorted Maxwell before turning to his guest and improvising an explanation to his guest. "Ah yes! This is Global Analysis... it provides us with analysis on... er... global matters."

In spite of this recognition in person from the great man, GAS's days were numbered, as its staff appreciated when Trachtenberg told them an impending move to offices of broom-cupboard proportions on the top floor of Orbit House "will be the most optimistic move that will ever be made by GAS".

Desperate GAS hacks hung on for a few more months in the rarified upper stories of Orbit House, disturbed only by the gales caused every time Cap'n Bob's helicopter landed or took off from the adjacent tower. Kev Maxwell finally pulled the plug on GAS's IIM service, leaving clients like Ford of Europe and AT&T with blank on-line terminal screens.

However, before its demise, GAS's special projects division had spawned a new entity, London and Bishopsgate International Investment Management (LBI). Trachtenberg and Smith had already departed from GAS to take up residence in LBI's smart riverside offices, aided by ace handshaker Lord Donoughue. Trachtenberg's "money management skills" were not sufficiently called upon and he was reported to be spending most of his time signing share registration documents at the Maxwells' behest.

Possibly Trachtenberg's greatest coup as a director of LBI came in June 1989 when he launched the UK Ethical Index, an investment vehicle which aimed to track the performance of the FT All Share Index and which would invest in companies fulfilling certain ethical criteria such as the recognition of trade unions, non-investment in South Africa etc. It was designed to attract money from local authority and trade union pension funds.

Trachtenberg's UK Ethical Index introduced an element that set it apart from other ethical investment vehicles. A pension fund investing through the Index could specify a number of ethical criteria, but these depended on how much was invested. For instance, a fund putting in £1 million could specify that it was not to be invested in companies that had dealings with South Africa, made political donations, and competed with local authority services. For a £10 million investment, the fund could specify these plus another three criteria — trade union recognition, environmental responsibility, and non-involvement with tobacco. An ethical stance became a priced commodity.

Yet business ethics and trade union recognition had not been one of Trachtenberg's strengths at Global Analysis Systems. Pensions Investment Research Consultants (PIRC) were called in to screen the companies in the Index, while Trachtenberg and Lord Donoughue went about flogging the idea to potential clients. Top of the list of companies that Trachtenberg forwarded to PIRC for screening was — surprise, surprise — Maxwell Communications Corporation.

PIRC had no hesitation in removing MCC from the Index on various counts, such as Maxwell's interest in South Africa and union problems at Pergamon. Maxwell was not pleased, but agreed to sell off his South African interests in order to qualify. PIRC still insisted that the union problems were an obstacle. The Index eventually died for lack of interest.

However, Trachtenberg's experience with pension funds had obviously impressed the Maxwells. Only a couple of months before the Cap'n's death, Trachtenberg was rewarded with a directorship in Bishopsgate Investment Management, the company at the centre of the pension fund frauds.

Transport

Tunnel vision

THE Severn Tunnel train crash has concentrated minds on safety in the Channel Tunnel. And not before time. It is much longer than the Severn Tunnel. Accidents could happen farther from the casualty stations, possibly 15 miles farther. Many more people could be involved in any tragedy, as there will be up to 10,000 in the tunnel at one time.

Eurotunnel say that while the Severn crash may have been caused by human error, the Channel Tunnel will be controlled by computer. In the view of safety experts this compounds the risk, because computers are operated by erring humans and, in any case, are perfectly capable of screwing up on their own.

The safety issues still outstanding were first revealed in the *Eye* on August 2. The Department of Transport confirms that they are still unresolved. A key issue is staffing levels on the trains. Eurotunnel want to keep it down to six people looking after each train, carrying up to 260 vehicles and 3,000 passengers, some of whom can be relied on to try to fool around by getting out of their cars to stretch their legs and have a smoke.

Another problem is whether the cars and lorries need to be clamped to the wagons or can rely on handbrakes and gear levers. Dr Herbert Eisner, former director of the government's explosion and flame laboratory, makes the point that if a collision like the one in the Severn Tunnel had happened in the Channel Tunnel, cars and lorries would have shot forward, many of them full of petrol and liable to catch fire. A third issue is precautions against seismic risk, which should have been sorted out before work even started.

Student Games

Sheffield: the steal city

AFTER THREE years of lies and deception the truth has finally emerged in the fiasco surrounding last July's World Student Games.

The much-derided event, hosted by Sheffield City Council amid enormous public apathy, officially lost £10.44 million, despite promises from the city's spend, spend, spend Labour leaders that they would break even once they had rounded up sponsorship and marketing deals.

However, as was well documented in the *Eye*, Sheffield council did its best to ensure the entire operation was botched, hiring marketing consultants whom they fired when they raised a pittance, before re-hiring most of them after they re-appeared under a new guise!

Eventually, the organisers rounded up a meagre £10 million from local businesses, already well-versed in Sheffield's recent commercial decline. Unfortunately, it cost them more than £20 million to put the show on the road. And that was just for the operating costs.

Sheffield now boasts sporting facilities that surpass anything in Britain, and would shame most US cities. But building them has cost the city's charge-payers, some of the poorest in Britain, £170 million — £30 million more than estimated. Funnily enough, the last time a British sporting occasion lost large sums, the 1986 Commonwealth Games, the chairman of the organising committee was one Robert Maxwell.

Following the announcement of the multi-million pound losses the city has been awash with recriminations. Local Liberal Democrat parliamentary hopeful Peter Gold has attacked councillors for refusing to open up the books and allow the public to check the number of noughts in the deficit column. Labour, of course, is pledged to enact a Freedom of Information Act should it win the next general election.

Sheffield Central MP Dick Caborn, meanwhile, usually so adept at blaming Whitehall for starving Sheffield of funds, eschewed the chance to slam his party colleagues for going on an unprecedented spending spree with his constituents' next 50 or so annual council tax bills. Instead he fingered Peter Burns, chief executive of the Games' first organising company, Universiade GB Ltd, whom he accused of being sacked for incompetence after spending £25,000 re-decorating his free Games flat.

In fact, not only did Burns plead with council chiefs to abandon the Games once he realised huge losses were unavoidable, but, as he points out, the flat was later sold (after its re-decoration had been agreed by fellow board members) for a "handsome profit" — just about the only thing connected with the Games that *didn't* lose money!

Twenty five miles across the Pennines, Manchester's Olympic Games bid organisers now realise that Sheffield's incompetence has put paid to any lingering chance they had of bringing the Olympics to England. Yet despite knowing its handling of the Games had been a national disgrace, Sheffield was until recently still pressing ahead with a bid to stage the 1988 Commonwealth Games — until the British International Sports Committee aborted the application.

So who is to blame in Sheffield? A likely candidate is council leader Clive Betts, whose obstinate refusal to accept that the Games had failed has been matched only by his efforts at self-aggrandizement from the Games' publicity. With astonishing gall, Betts now claims that since council leaders had only bargained for losses of £5 million they will be asking for "explanations as to why we are being asked to find more money." He has asked hard-pressed city council chief executive Pamela Gordon to investigate; Gordon should have little trouble finding the culprit.

Next year Betts will contest the parliamentary seat of Sheffield Attercliffe for Labour. Although he knows Sheffielders would normally vote for a donkey if it wore a red rosette, they might not vote for an ass.

In the City

"YES, he was a crook," *Daily Telegraph* City editor Neil Collins somewhat belatedly informed his readers a month after Robert Maxwell went over the side and days after his pillaging of the pension funds was confirmed.

This verdict must have come as a shock to *Telegraph* readers, who more than most have been fed a diet of pro-Maxwell propaganda for years. Only in April a profile in the *Sunday Telegraph* disclosed it was "a newspaper he likes".

But given the claims now trumpeted abroad by seemingly the entire City that they always knew the truth about the Bouncing Czech, such announcements are the only excuse for the silent majority who enabled Maxwell to rise from the grave in which he had been rightfully interred after Pergamon to victimise pensioners and shareholders. We knew but we dare not say, declare those who spent years cosying up to Maxwell.

The truth is that with a few honourable exceptions, until the final terminal phase the City and the financial press bought and promoted Cap'n Bob's schemes and stayed silent when he bullied those who exposed his lies. Big fees and inflated egos persuaded bankers and brokers that Maxwell was safe to do business with or could be controlled. Journalists fell for the relentless Maxwell self-publicity machine and the crumbs of information that fell from his telephone calls, his table or his yacht.

That was always much easier and safer than risking Maxwell's wrath and writs. The siren song of Maxwell's advisers such as "Sir" Michael Richardson (who did know all about Maxwell from his Pergamon days when he was at Panmure Gordon before they abandoned ship), Samuel Montagu, Henry Ansbacher, Hill Samuel and Goldman Sachs was always more reassuring than the unflattering version sung by *Private Eye*, the *Daily Mail*, Lex in the *Financial Times* and the *Independent*.

So in the 10 years from 1981 when Maxwell rose again to rescue British Printing, the warning signs given by the Department of Trade & Industry reports were either ignored or the Maxwell Big Lie — that he had been exonerated — was accepted. That was then, this is now was the chorus as newspaper after newspaper chronicled each Maxwell success until it became clear to even the blind that he had over-gorged on bank borrowings to build the empire which is now in ruins.

The *Sunday Telegraph*, first under Ivan Fallon (now at the *Sunday Times*) then Ian Watson (ironically a Maxwell victim, going under with the *European*) and now John Jay (whose excuse is that he saw Maxwell merely as "a buccaneer who sailed close to the wind"), was ever eager to please. Maxwell was a regular at its Christmas party. He was there last year when the wheels were already starting to come off.

Repeated tips and puffs for BPC featured from the early eighties. More recently Maxwell was described as "tireless" and "dazzling the City" (27.9.87); the "indefatigable publisher" (22.11.87); "the irrepressible" (24.4.88); "the ever active" (31.7.88); "the ebullient" (6.11.88). Never the crook. Indeed, the DTI criticisms were not allowed to sully these pages of praise.

As to the *Daily Telegraph*, it considered the crook's shares were a buy as long as ago as August 1986 — "buy on any weakness" — and as recently as April 1989 — "the potential is there".

Others to see the DTI's verdict as no barrier to tipping Maxwell were John Davis of *The Observer* in October 1986 ("one of the most remarkable corporate comebacks of all time"); the *Economist* ("a man to watch [how true!]") in November 1986; *The Times* ("a man to reckon with") also in November 1986 and again in August 1989 ("the shares are still modestly cheap"); and even the *Guardian*, which in June 1987 asked: "Where does this leave the doubters, the people who have felt all along that the whole thing will end in tears? For the moment they are silenced. In the short term they have been wrong."

Then there were the analysts. Experts like Henry Poole of Laing & Cruickshank, who became Maxwell's brokers. Not surprising with such 1987 wisdom as "Robert Maxwell has built on secure foundations." No wonder Credit Lyonnais, who bought L&C, ended up as major unsecured lenders.

Others to recommend BPC/MCC were Earnshaw Haes (a "strong buy" in February 1986 at 208p); Messel (taken over by another Maxwell lender, Shearson Lehman) who rated the shares a buy at 216p a month later; Kleinwort Grieveson who gave the same advice at 281p in September 1986 and made the shares a "strong buy" at 264p in February 1987; Warburg Securities who made the bank's old enemy a buy in January 1988 and Chase Manhattan who told clients to buy a month later at 235p. The shares are now worthless.

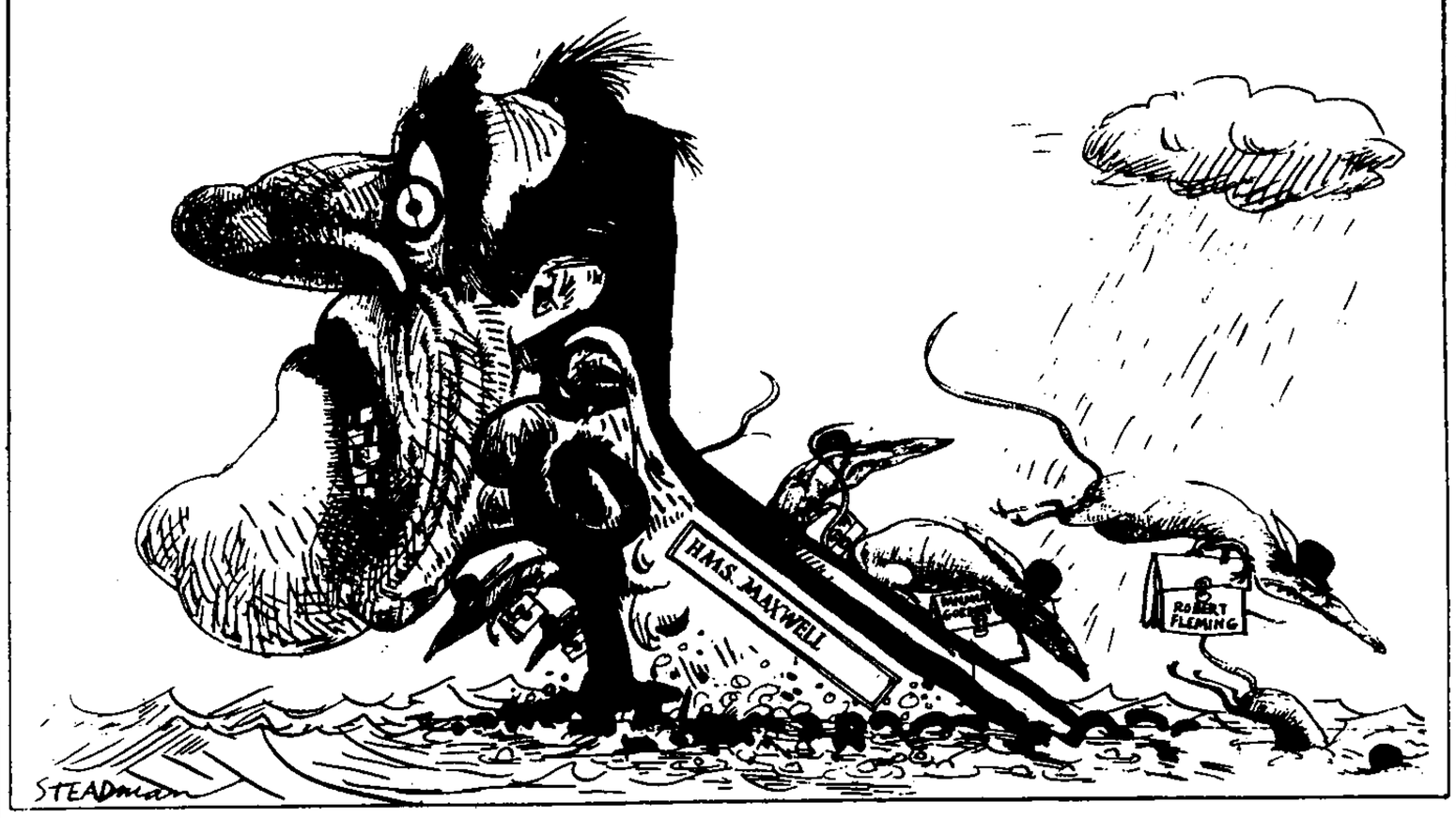
So much, then, for what everybody always knew.

Indeed, for a very short time those same hacks who had stayed silent over the crimes of the father were quick to rally to the cause of the sons. Seduced once more by the right of audience and the proffered titbits plus the encouragement of the old City retainers, journalists trumpeted the claims of assets comfortably exceeding debts (calculations done by such longtime Maxwell patsies as accountants Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte and Bankers Trust) and of no more skeletons in the cupboard.

It was almost like old times. Ivan Fallon and John Jay were to the fore in this fawning exercise, with others close behind. The *Sunday Times* had no time for the "traditional Maxwell haters". But that was 24 November when Kevin and Ian were featured in sympathetic tones and full colour. Three weeks later and it was "Maxwell: the net closes" over pictures of the brothers. This time the Maxwell love affair had become little more than a one-night stand. Even the gullible finally fell in to the fact that Cap'n Bob never had a crew of one.

It is perhaps significant, therefore, that Kevin Maxwell has chosen to advise him none other than lawyer Monty Raphael, that avid defender of the rich and the white collar guilty (Anthony Parnes — once Maxwell's broker — and Robert Miller of Dunsdale Securities).

PRIVATE EYE — THEN & NOW



The rats leaving the sinking Shit

Private Eye 202, 12 September 1969

effectively market-rigging exercises.

It would also seem that, once again as with Nadir and George Walker, not all the myriad banks lending to Maxwell were fully in the picture as regards what loans were secured on what assets by what banks. Some banks, it seems, fear they are less secured than they understood, perhaps because some assets are either worth less than imagined or possibly subject to rival claims.

Again tha[illegible]ld normally be matters which

Private Eye 781, 22 November 1991

LENDERS to George "The Accused" Walker may be in for an unpleasant surprise as far as his assets in France are concerned.

It appears the remaining chateau, Rausan-Segla in Bordeaux's Margaux region, while possibly worth £30-32 million if a buyer could be found, alas, already carries borrowings of a similar sum. Credit Agricole is said to be owed about £20 million with interest; Arab Banking Corporation some £8.5 million; and local banks another possible £1.5 million.

Walker bought four chateaux from his own company Brent Walker on behalf of his family trust with, it is believed, the aid of his favourite mugs, Standard Chartered. The trust was to pay £50 million but it seems the price somehow was slimmed to nearer £46 million and of that £10 million was deferred and is still outstanding. A deal shareholders might bear in mind before rallying to Walker's side at the 19 December meeting to vote him off the board.

The three smaller chateaux were sold last year for around £36 million plus another £4.5 million for the wine shipping business. But in the meantime it seems that Walker borrowed against the remaining chateau from his favourite banks to finance the uptake of last year's soon gone bond issue — another £27 million.

With Standard Chartered, TSB, Lloyds and others threatening Walker with bankruptcy over the £60 million he owes, it looks like there will be yet another shortfall when assets and debts are totted up.

IT IS to be hoped that at this time of goodwill the great financier Sir James Goldsmith in his Mexican hideaway will not forget the less fortunate. Such as his erstwhile major General Oriental shareholder Charles Keating, who earlier this month received an unwelcome birthday gift. Keating was convicted on 17 counts of defrauding investors of $250 milllion in worthless junk bonds issued by his American Continental Corporation.

NEWS that Agha Hasan Abedi, founder of the Bank of Cocaine, Conmen and Impostors, is prepared to assist the Bingham inquiry — presumably if they make the pilgrimage to Pakistan, extradition laws being the way they are — may throw light on the persistent suggestions that Abedi's past largesse (which knew no bounds where politicians and officials outside Britain was concerned) might have extended as far as Bank of England officials. Given the Bank's antipathy to BCCI in the seventies and early eighties this is hard to believe. But the stories — like the one about an alleged Abedi taped telephone conversation referring to his influence inside the Bank — won't go away.

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BEAT THE "YOBS"! Decoy video cameras, automatic lights, door, window and personal attack alarms. Low prices. Money-back guarantee. Ring 0274-871428, PO Box 27, Cleckheaton, BD19 4TF for brochures.

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YOUR SLOGAN T-shirt. 0736-66248.

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TO SEND A gift of The Macallan 10 year old Malt Whisky, Nationwide Call FREE, 0800 272121.

CERTIFICATES MADE to order. All types of certificates made to your own specification. Details with pleasure. (loose stamp appreciated.) ERIC KIRBY, 40 Tanhill Close, Offerton, Stockport, Cheshire SK2 5LE. Tel: (before noon) 061-487 1475.

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BE THE "LIFE of the party"! Simon Lovell's "Show and Tell" 75 minute action video reveals more than 50 laugh making, audience participating impromptu stunts, tricks, gags and "betchas" that you will do! Not sold in shops. "THE PARTY ANIMAL" — £21.50 (inc 1st cl. P&P). Guaranteed. The T.A.T. Co, 47 Clerkenwell Road, London EC1M 5RS. VISA/ACCESS OK. 071-253 9693.

A "TITLE" FOR a tenner? Details SASURVIVAL (P), Gayfield, Arbroath, Scotland, DD11 1QJ.

THE CLAMPOGRAM KIT. Hilarious present or stitch up the one you love(?) Details: phone/fax 0772-684730.

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THIS CHRISTMAS give someone a memory to last a lifetime — an original newspaper dated the very day they were born. £16.95 plus free 1880s TIMES. 0492 531195.

LAWYER GIFTS — traditional and irreverent. Free brochure 0734 264822.

CARTOON OF YOU and yours for every occasion. CARTOONCRAFT: 0235-868378.

RICK'S CARICATURES and cartoons. Phone for samples and prices. 081-441 6607.

ARE YOU THICK? SAE to DENSA, 16 Connaught Street, London W2.

GUIDE TO Medomsley Road, Consett... travel and snacks. Exclusive leather 1992 pocket diary. Ideal gift for distant Aunt. Limited quantity only. Only £8.80 (incl P&P). Apply to: PHILEAS FOGG ESQ (make cheques payable to PHILEAS FOGG) Medomsley Road, Consett, Co. Durham DH8 6SU.

ALAN'S CARTOON caricatures, from photographs. 0202 433716 for examples.

FRACTALS! Prints, cards, T-shirts, sweatshirts. Send SAE for catalogue to: R. Ramsey, 9 Andrews Drive, Stanley Common, Derbys. DE7 6GJ.

In May "DENSA" had just two members. Following adverts in that bastion of anti-intellectualism, *Private Eye*, applications soared.
The Observer

RED TELEPHONE kiosks and accessories. Also letter/pillar boxes. 0243 65369.

BIRTHDATE/ANNIVERSARY newspapers — FREEPHONE 0800 181803.

LINDI ST. CLAIR'S Corrective Party T-shirts. "Breaking the chains of sexual repression". (Exclusive bondage design) £10. Also: Lindi's 62" boob Kinky video. 1hr VHS £25. 58 Eardley Crescent, London SW5 9JZ.

BALLOON SAFARIS around London and the South East. Xmas offer £99 pp. 0784 451007.

BALLOON, BALLOON, balloon — fly over Hants/Berks/Surrey. Ideal gift/surprise, presentation vouchers available £95. 081-840 0108.

ERECTION PROBLEM? Soiled underwear? Effective remedies hilariously described on our authentic looking joke boxes. For a great wind-up, put our embarrassing empty boxes in your mate's loo at his party. Erectospasm, Crappo, Come & Go, Itchcock, Muffdiver and Big Prick all have instructions in a dead-pan pharmaceutical style which make fascinating reading. For six different boxes send £6 cheque/postal order to MT BOXES, PO Box 1631, Benfleet, Essex, SS7 3JW. Fast delivery.

MARK "RENAISSANCE" Rainbow: 50 on 18th December. Congratulations we say! Love you, Janey, XX

CAN WOMEN LOVE stupid men? See DENSA (Novelties).

OLD ETONIANS & Oxbridge: suppressors of others' talents. Pt I.

EL-FRISKONIA, was it your letter I saw in "Dear Tricia"? WORRIED OF B.

LANCASTER HUGGLE monster. I fancy you. ED.

CHESS COMPETITION. Details. S.A.E. Box 0182.

1991 WAS KIDDIEWINKIE Year 1. They're in place. Rockweiler howling is in. Now watch the decline.

MISTER STEVE. Get in touch. Fro Bill and Mister Mark.

JUDY. I MISS YOU. Steve.

BLOODY NORTHERNER Happy Christmas. Love U, Miss U, EG.

HAPPY CHRISTMAS, Froggie. Love, LOM.

YORK WIFE inundated arfter lengthy hiatus. Rendezvous/replies impracticable.

CAROLINE PHONE Doc. 071-515 0031. 10 am 30/12.

WEASEL ADORES Christmas chicken — no sharks please.

RUBBERLESS, RANDY, rotten, runny rat rumbles repeated rubbish. REALLY.

THE MEAN FrIEND team.

VERY NICE — Regent St. 11th November. Remember looking back? I do. Box 0183.

MID-TUSCANY. Renovations. Bargains. 010 39 0577 66 22 48.

HAMILTON TERRACE. Flat with garage in St Johns Wood's premier road. £110,000. 071-286 6239.

RURAL RETREAT? Butterfly cottage, Ding Dong, near Penzance, granite, beams, red Aga, fully double-glazed, amazing views. £62,500. 0736-60807. After 6.00 pm.

STREATHAM TOWERS. Large double fronted 19th century gentleman's residence for sale. Drive in and out, space for 3/4 cars to park. 120ft rear garden with sheds and greenhouse, two living rooms, one 28½ft by 15, both with French windows, dining room, kitchen, toilet, all on ground floor. Bathroom, 4 bedrooms, toilet and laundry room on first floor. Top floor, self-contained flat with kitchen/dining room, bathroom/toilet and two large rooms. Rambling cellar, could be converted into living accommodation/workshop. Gas central heating, on service contract, rewired. Two stones' throw, from BR station, ice rink/Safeway, etc. easy for the City. Ring TONY RUSHTON on 071 437 4017 or 081 769 7339 to view and haggle. Asking price is £280,000. Sadly, Lambeth poll tax.

TENERIFE — 2nd floor apartment in private, security-guarded residential block, with own pools, 10 mins from sea, port and town, east of Los Cristianos. Hall, living room, verandah, bathroom, bedroom, telephone, mountain views. All linen, crockery, kitchen utensils etc included in £33,500 price. Contact: OCEAN PROPERTIES, Avda de Suecia, 56, 38650 Los Cristianos, Tenerife. Telephone (010 3422) 791262.

ESCAPE TO the peace of the Somerset countryside. 2-bedroomed cottage in Glastonbury town centre, centrally-heated and cosy, with views across the Abbey grounds. Winter and spring dates still available (long lets preferred). Telephone: 0234 211606 (answerphone).

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ELECTRONICS postgraduate. Own 386 computer seeks work. Anything considered. 0793-542757.

VERSATILE WRITER will write articles/sub-edit/proof-read for fair remuneration. Box 0783.

AT W.H. SMITH'S: "Strike It Rich — Success On The Pools", by Simon Carrley. £4.99. (ISBN 0907595707). Ideal gift for dividend seekers.

CARY GRANT Stopped Me Smoking — the revolutionary hypnagogic method. £6 p'back. PIPER'S PRESS, Montrose, Scotland DD10 8QB. (0674-72298).

BANISH BUNIONS! How one man succeeded. £6.49 or SAE for details, HARPENDEN BOOKS, PO Box 429 (PI), Harpenden, AL5 3QH.

THE FRAUD REPORT — A Consumer's (or con man's) Guide to Survival." £12.50 or SAE for details: GOWER PRESS, PO Box 260, Cardiff, CF2 6XT.

"HOW TO AVOID Paying Your Debts". Buy it before they ban it. £14.50 or SAE for details: GOWER PRESS, PO Box 260, Cardiff, CF2 6XT.

BORBORYGMI OF THE BRAIN, the fart-fodder paperback. £3.95 to GOSS, 29 Douglas Road, Acocks Green, B27 6HH.

THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE are publishing for themselves — the DTP revolution hits Britain. Read all about it, join it, do it yourself. The all-new 1992 Small Press Yearbook is now on sale at the old price — £6.99 + £1 p&p. Lists more than 2,000 small presses in Britain, access to 20,000 in America. Tips galore! SMALL PRESS GROUP, 20 Paul Street, Frome, BA11 1DX. Credit cards: 0373 51777

CLUE 7: Only two weeks after third letter Ripper murdered office clerk Josephine Whittaker in Halifax. Her left breast bore Ripper "signature" bite with its one-inch gap and "B" blood saliva. It was made by Harrison's killer. Additionally her shoes and coat bore the same Harrison theatricals. It was the Ripper's way of authenticating his soon-to-be-published letters. Police were by now certain writer was the Ripper. "The Real Yorkshire Ripper Revealed", £5.00, NOEL O'GARA, Ballinahowen, Athlone, Ireland.

GRASP THE FUTURE with both hands! This book teaches how to read and interpret your findings using the rare skill of GENITOLOGY. £8 (includes p&p) from COUNTER PRODUCTIONS, PO Box 556, London SE5 0RL. (Makes palmistry look like a load of bollocks.)

NEW DEPARTURES revival issue is 400-page GRANDCHILDREN OF ALBION, 40 younger voices Agard Bragg JCC Gabriel LKJ Okri Pitt-Kethley Weller Zephaniah et al beaut pix sent post free til '92 for only £9.99 to NEW DEPARTURES, Piedmont, Bisley, Stroud, Glouc. GL6 7BU.

TRAIN TO TEACH ENGLISH 1990s world passport. Weekend certificate courses throughout UK. Contact JULIE: 0272-444503.

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Otterswick Theatrical Props

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EYES 28 TO DATE plus twelve binders. Offers: 0446-781349.

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FOOTSIE WON £650 Wall Street £870 others $1,950 during fortnight to 6 Dec following daily tips on 0839 007745 36p min cheap, 48p min other. CIC Box 1650 B1 1AA.

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YOUR OWN BUSINESS for under £50. Earn 100s weekly part-time. Free information pack. D&B PUBLICATIONS, 29 Paget Road, Penarth, Sough Glamorgan.

DO YOU WANT to win the pools? Join our pools syndicate. Increase your chances. It's easy, we fill your coupons. SAE: SPORTX INFO LINK UNIT, 4/386 Boldmere Road, West Midlands B73 5EZ.

MAJOR ACHIEVERS. Instead of being paid what you earn — earn what you are worth. This is the business opportunity of the nineties. Write to Box 0883.

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THIS ONE WORKS! Telephone Betty or John (business hours) for free information 0742 729282.

STEPHEN ALAN KAYE FCA — a Beatle fan. I have lost your letter, but I do want you. Please write again. I trust you read page 76 of the Mail on Sunday, 8 December 1991. Box 8283.

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION sources required. Box 1183.

I AM RESEARCHING a book on dirty tricks of the big banks and finance companies. Genuine tales of deceit, pressure tactics, incompetence, foreclosure, etc. invited. All information treated in the strictest confidence. Precis in the first instance please to Box 0583.

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APOLOGY! Our prices bring tears to the eyes of our competitors. Although genuinely sorry, we can't help offering our customers the best hi-fi prices in the country, if not the world! RICHER SOUNDS, Freephone 0800 591 366 (24 hrs) for your FREE copy of our bargain-packed fun catalogue/price list.

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UNIVERSITY DEGREES by mail. Free details: U.D.M. 6 Springlawn Drive, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15, Ireland.

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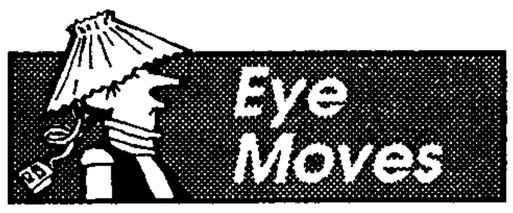

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SANCTUARY. Arts, adventure, care, free open house for the young. Est. for 13 years, needs £10,000 min to get con-man off our necks. Contact: TESS, Upper Wig, Dolfor, Newtown, Powys, Wales. Tel: 0686-622266.

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URGENTLY NEEDED — Professional with integrity, ideas and drive needs up to £20,000 loan/gift to develop potentially lucractive business venture. Box 8383.

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MAD MUSO paraplegic needs pounds to improve recording studio and reach the top of muso industry. Big dreams need big bucks. Box 8583.

LOST, FEARFUL. £7,840 of private debt. Any donations please. Box 5183.

THE CORRECTIVE PARTY need £1 million for political campaign to crush bigotry. Please donate something. 58 Eardley Crescent, London SW5 9JZ.

£1,850 NEEDED urgently. Thank you. Box 1283.

PLEASE PLEASE HELP. Student desperately needs financial assistance to continue education. Offers/donations/sponsorships. Anything appreciated. Box 1483.

DESPAIRING STUDENT needs large cash gift urgently. Please help. Box 1583.

DEAF STUDENT, finalist, Manchester University needs £1,000 to complete degree. Genuine. All help acknowledged. Box 1683.

DESPERATE SINGLE mother needs help. Box 1783.

THREE BOYS 'n' me. Desperate "£15,000" to get disfigurements reversed. Cheers! Box 1883.

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GNOME ALONE. Avoid a major crisis. Contact HIGH RIDINGS TRAVEL for worldwide airfares. Tel: 0924 471177, fax: 0924 475207.

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DRIVING LANDROVER to ERITREA. January. Share costs/company. Box 0982.

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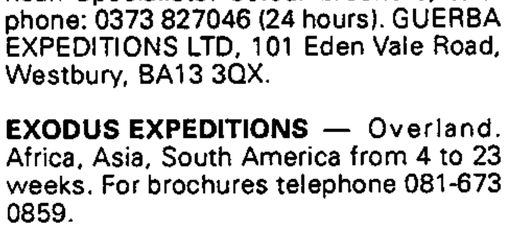

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SLIM, ATTRACTIVE, warm, caring, articulate business-woman (48) with delightful house in Derbyshire Peak District seeks permanent soulmate. Interests: travel, witty conversation, skiing, theatre. No one-night stands, please. Box 2583.

DALEY THOMPSON look-a-like seeks Bo Derek look-a-like for sheer indulgence. Photo. Box 2683.

BUSINESSMAN, 48, married, seeks Notts she, 28-45 to share fun and TLC. Box 2783.

DASHING, PROFESSIONAL male, 27, high-flying, romantic, caring, funny, seeks slim, attractive, stylish, tasty, 23-30 for love, laughs. London/SE. Box 2883.

SUCCESSFUL GENTLEMAN, (30) requires attractive lady to cook, wash and iron. Remuneration paid in kind nightly! Photo. Box 2983.

PRE-RAPHAELITE WOMAN (forties) intelligent, irreverent, honest, good communicator, loves art, classical, music, jazz, literature, theatre, countryside seeks kind, tall, slim man with brilliant sense of humour. East Anglia. Box 3083.

LUNCH IN PARIS. (home for tea!) for best letter from attractive lady of character. All replies acknowledged. Box 5082.

ONE-OFF, good humoured, single, handsomely statuesque Yank teddy-bear classical male musician (39) seeks a prospective Mrs Bach to experience fugues with forever. You are 25-40, European (preferably Scandinavian), without issue, well read, sensual and exquisite in every way. Photo/letter/phone/ASAP. Happy Holidays! Box 5482.

MAN, 35, SINGLE, lawyer, lives S.W. London, not unsuccessful, sense of humour, tall, quite fit, seeks woman of spirit and sense to sample his cooking and if she survives, who knows? Box 3183.

FEMALE 23, seeks correspondent. Box 3283.

LONDON LADY, Far Eastern, likes arts, countryside, music, cooking. Seeks male company, 40-50 for friendship. how about Boat Show next month? Photo please. Box 3383.

OXFORD MATHEMATICIAN aged 48, skinny, 6ft, seeks friendship with thin, intelligent woman. Box 3483.

MS "ALMOST PERFECT" 28, attractive and intelligent seeks gorgeous, literate, stimulating Northern man to fill a gap in her life. Box 3583.

FERTILE MALE (40) with infertile wife, seeks healthy lady for joint production. Photo please. Box 3683.

MALE, 35, graduate, solvent, single, Sagittarian seeks petite female (25-35) for fun and evenings out in SW London. Photo and letter please. Smokers welcome. Box 3783.

PROFESSIONAL MAN, unhappily married, 51, 5'7½", slim, London, seeks permanent 1:1 affair with similar woman. You must love classical music, hate garlic, be under 51, well educated. Box 3883.

EAST ANGLIAN professional, 31, bored with the same old routine, seeks lady 25-35 of similar disposition. Letter and photo please. Box 3983.

MALE, 27, recently moved to NE, seeks woman for arts, countryside, perhaps more, to help prove it's not Grim Up North. Photo appreciated and returned. Box 4083.

FEMALE, 23, enjoys skiing, travelling, dining out or staying in. Seeks like-minded Yorkshire male. Box 4183.

CARING SUSSEX MALE, 40s, divorced, threatened by terminal boredom, seeks sensual 30s shapely Southerner for successful rescue. Told attractive, laughing, kind, generous, romantic, physical. Likes sharing, sailing, kids, cuddles, intelligence. Photo appreciated (returned). All letters answered. Box 4283.

CHARISMATIC, successful businessman, mid fifties, with assertive tendencies, seeks lady, any age group with compliant feelings for wining and dining. Can accommodate. Central London. Box 4383.

UNPRINCIPLED LAD seeks intelligent, amusing woman, 24-35, naggers and Essex girls need not apply, no time wasters. E. Anglia. Box 4483.

YOUNG 40s, romantic man, running Vegetarian Capricornian. Languages, travel — seeks girl — must be under 30½, athletic, curvaceousish, Scorpioish. Please send letter and photo. Box 4583.

MAN FROM A MORE gentle time invites response from lovely lady for occasional dinners, concerts and laughs to escape society gone berserk. Box 4683.

ROXANNE, 31, seeks Cyrano, 35-50. Surrey-based. Long letter please. Box 4783.

AFFECTIONATE GUY, existential democrat, secure, attractive, (45, 6ft, slim), needs attractive, kind, younger female friend, free (e.g. unemployed) to explore arts/crafts. Lifestyle possibilities. Box 4883.

FEMALE, EARLY 50s, seeks clear male for country and city outings. London. Box 4983.

LOVING, PASSIONATE, under 27, who enjoys eating out/travel needed for spoiling by caring, solvent, generous, married businessman, over 40, who enjoys everything. Berkshire/anywhere. Photo please. Box 5083.

CHARMING, ENERGETIC graduate (27, N/S) seeks attractive, witty female company for nights out and in. Bath/North Wilts. Box 5283.

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HUNKY MALE, 37, witty, romantic, cuddly, passionate, needs sensuous, intelligent, physical woman for friend and lover. Sussex/South East. Box 7283.

MALE RAVER, 27, graduate, professional, seeks female equivalent for London clubbing and chilling. Box 7383.

IF I PROFANE... You know the rest, Julie. I am now 28, living in Dorset, turned Vegetarian, enjoying music, walking. Love, Ron. Box 5383.

DO YOU ENJOY FILM and theatre? Male (28) graduate, W. Midlands, desperately needs intelligent female to rescue him from too much work. Photo appreciated. Box 7483.

MARRIED MAN, 36, London-based, seeks similar (upmarket) lady (30-50) for exceptionally discreet longterm affair. Telephone number appreciated. Box 7583.

SOUGHT: RENAISSANCE man for exploring country treasures, city culture, the sporting life and the art of living. Me: 27, vivacious, pretty, woefully overeducated. You: fun and trustworthy. Box 7683.

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LADY WITH GOOD looks, brains and humour seeks similar mate, 50+, smokeless, unattached, London-ish. Box 7883.

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I'M HOPING TO hear from a 50ish cleverish, affluentish female to make life sparkle again. Letter/photo please. NW/Midlands. Box 6483.

VISITING GLASGOW/ Edinburgh at least monthly. Director, 50s, with long lonely nights seeks tall, fun loving N/S, professional female, 30-45 for exciting, no-strings relationship. Discretion essential. Photo and phone please. Box 6583.

PROFESSIONAL BACHELOR, handsome, humorous, kind, 39, lives country seeks lady for romance. Interests include walking, pony trekking, cinema, home life. Photo appreciated. Box 6683.

LIVELY, WELL TRAVELLED female, 24, seeks caring man, 25-30, for culture and food. London. We could say we met at Sainsburys. Box 6783.

BUSINESSMAN, 40, separated, seeks attractive woman, age unimportant, for fun and romance. London/Home Counties. ALA. Box 6883.

TALL, PROFESSIONAL man, 40, married, graduate, own business, living Central South, can travel, wants to look after attractive girl in private relationship. Humour, good conversation guaranteed. Occasional free afternoons essential. Box 6983.

HANDSOME, INTELLIGENT man, 24, seeking slim, attractive, zany female for passion, friendship, laughter. Am I the one? Age immaterial. Photo please. Box 7083.

EX-PAT BACHELOR, 34, tall, non-smoker, seeks humorous, feminine distraction, on frequent weeks off. Thames Valley. Box 5983.

SHY MALE SEEKS exhibitionist lady for lunch or evening rendezvous. Box 6083.

AFFLUENT, CARING man, mid 50s, 5'10", slim, retired. Houses: England, Spain, enjoys travelling, eating out, looking for slim young lady and nationality but good sense of humour and time for travel. Photo appreciated. ALA. Box 6183.

WELL-EDUCATED, SLIM girl, 30s, long blonde hair, adventurous, unconventional, writer, based London, country interests, seeks lovely, clever, caring, male, 30s-40s, balding City Slicker? No thanks. Confident, rural artist, land-carer, professional? Better! Box 6283.

ATTRACTIVE WOMAN, 25, needs witty male, athletic in body and mind. Box 6383.

MALE ESCAPOLOGIST, 32, seeks female to learn the ropes for double act. Box 5483.

BRIGHT, VERY artistic man (54), superb lover, seeks thin, passive woman to break in half. Discretion guaranteed. Box 5583.

HAPPY GO-LUCKY, widower seeks romantic/sensuous lady partner for fun, friendship and eventual marriage. Send phone number and photo if possible. Box 5683.

MUCH-TRAVELLED musician, Midlands, male, 30s, solvent, fun to be with, lots to give, seeks slim, sensual, soulmate, 20-35, for passion under the stars and maybe permanently. ALA. Photo if possible. Box 5783.

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